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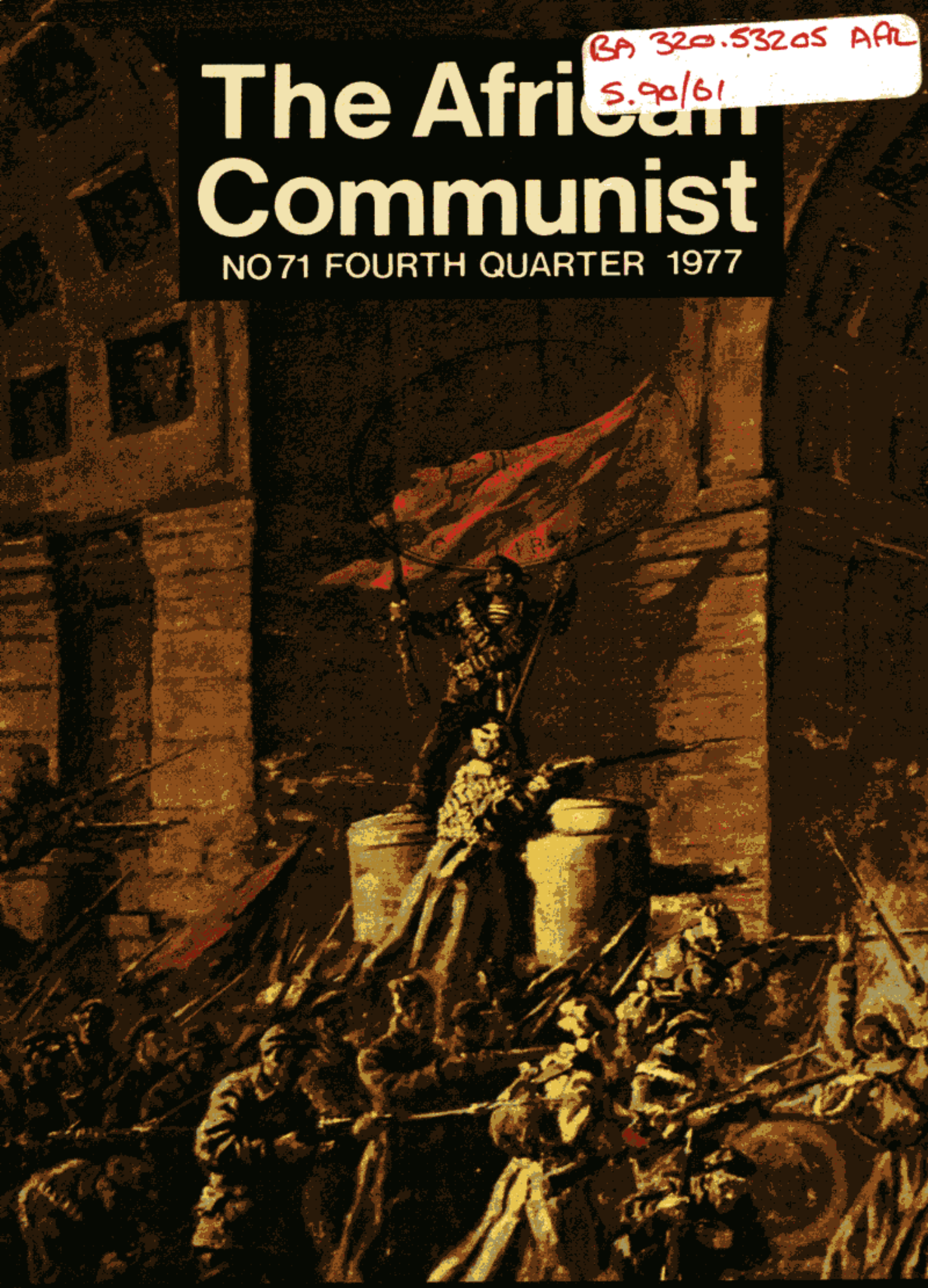

LONG LIVE THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION!

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Cover Picture: "The Storming of the Winter Palace" (detail)
by Sokolov-Skalya

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

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No. 71 Fourth Quarter 1977

CONTENTS

5 EDITORIAL NOTES
Long Live The October Revolution!; Another Bantustan Monster; Death of a Disunited Party; Foreign Intervention in Zaire.

John Lenkoe
16 OCTOBER LIVES ON IN SOUTH AFRICA
A survey of the profound influence of the October Revolution on the national liberation movements in South Africa and the rest of the African continent.

Vusizwe Seme
30 ON THE VARIOUS FORMS OF REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE
The experience of the October Revolution and the history of the Soviet Union illustrate the various forms of stuggle open to peoples fighting for social change on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

35 HOW THE ANGOLA COUP WAS CRUSHED
Statement issued by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of MPLA.

Agostinho Neto
52 PLEDGE OF SUPPORT FROM INDEPENDENT AFRICA
Speech delivered by the President of Angola at the opening session of the 29th meeting of the OAU co-ordinating commission for the liberation of Africa in Luanda last June.

Alexander Sibeko
60 CUBA AND ANGOLA – AN ACT OF SOLIDARITY
A survey of the historical links uniting Cuba with Africa and of the scope and significance of Cuba's policy of aid to Africa in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.

Phineas Malinga

70 TURNING POINT IN NAMIBIA

The South African Government and its imperialist allies are trying to turn aside the momentum of the liberation struggle and instal a neo-colonialist regime.

A. Langa

84 SUDAN'S COMMUNISTS POINT THE WAY FORWARD

The Sudanese Communist Party has produced a document analysing the internal situation and exposing the Nimeiri Government's alliance with imperialism, and proposing a National Democratic Front to mobilise the masses for united action against the regime.

Mengistu Haile Mariam

92 ETHIOPIA UNDER FIRE

In an interview with Neues Deutschland, *the chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council of Ethiopia outlines the aims and achievements of the revolutionary government.*

98 BOOK REVIEWS

Organised Labour and the Black Worker 1619 - 1973, by Philip S. Foner; *The Development of An African Working Class: Studies in Class Formation and Action*, Edited by Richard Sandbrook and Robin Cohen; *The Foundation of the Union of South Africa 1902-1910*, by R.R. Viatkina; *The Great White Hoax*, published by The Africa Bureau, London; *Cape to Cairo* by Mark Strage and *Strategic Highways of Africa* by Guy Arnold and Ruth Weiss;

EDITORIAL NOTES

LONG LIVE THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION!

We dedicate this issue of our journal to the most important event of this century – the Great October Revolution in Russia in 1917, which marked a decisive turning point in the history of the world. In our last issue we printed an article on "How the Russian Revolution Came to South Africa", dealing with the reaction in South Africa to the world-shaking events of that year. In this issue we print two more articles on aspects of the Revolution – one, "October Lives On in South Africa", describing the continuing impact of the Revolution on South Africa and the rest of the African continent in the ensuing decades; and the second "On the Various Forms of Revolutionary Struggle" showing

how the experience of the October Revolution and the history of the Soviet Union have thrown light on the choice of different methods of struggle open to peoples fighting for social change on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union have marked this auspicious anniversary with the production of a draft constitution for the Soviet Union which incorporates many new features reflecting the changes which have taken place in Soviet society in the period since the last constitution was adopted in 1936. In a statement welcoming the new constitution, the national chairman of the South African Communist Party Dr Y.M. Dadoo commented:

The draft constitution of the USSR approved by the Central Committee Plenum of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union last May and submitted for countrywide discussion marks an important step not only for the peoples of the Soviet Union but for the whole world. Coming as it does in the year in which the 60th anniversary of the Great October Revolution is being commemorated, it provides a measure of the tremendous achievements of the Soviet peoples under the leadership of the Communist Party and guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism in the testing years since 1917.

In a key passage in his report to the Central Committee plenum, comrade Leonid Brezhnev commented that with the building of mature socialism and the adoption of the ideological and political positions of the working class by all sections of the population, the Soviet state, which originated as a dictatorship of the proletariat, has developed into a state of the entire people. The draft constitution makes clear the extent to which the Soviet peoples have become masters of their own destiny, and have laid secure foundations for the transition from socialism to communism which remains the main objective of all their efforts.

The outstanding feature of the draft constitution is its clear exposition of the socialist principle that the rights of the individual are inextricable from his duties to the state, that individual progress cannot be separated from the progress of society as a whole, that freedom and security for all depend on the widening and extension of socialism and the productive resources of the state. The draft constitution stands as a shining contrast to the basic principle of bourgeois society which is

"each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost". Under socialism, as the Communist Manifesto of 1848 pointed out, "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all". The staggering achievements of the peoples of the Soviet Union since 1917 show the amazing strength which can be generated by adherence to this principle.

The draft constitution is the fruit of 60 years of struggle by the embattled Soviet people – struggle against foreign invasion by the imperialist powers, struggle against the white guards and counter-revolutionaries, struggle to overcome economic dislocation and famine, above all the never-to-be-forgotten struggle to defeat the monster of fascism during the Great Patriotic War. To have built socialism and raised the Soviet Union to the front rank of world powers in the face of all these challenges is testimony not only to the courage of the Soviet people but above all to the enduring social and political values which are incorporated in the draft constitution.

The Great October Revolution was of benefit not only to the Soviet people but to the whole of mankind. The iron curtain of capitalism which once enshrouded the whole world was torn asunder, and the way opened not only for the achievement of socialism in many other countries but also for the liberation of the enslaved peoples in the colonies of imperialism. This outward looking policy of the Soviet Union is incorporated in the draft constitution, which now for the first time contains a special chapter on foreign policy, setting out the Leninist policy of peaceful coexistence and the consolidation of the security of the international community. But Soviet foreign policy is not a selfish policy aimed only at protecting the interests of the Soviet peoples. As the draft constitution makes clear, it aims also at strengthening the positions of world communism and supporting the struggle of peoples for national liberation. Socialist internationalism is the basic principle of Soviet foreign policy.

The Soviet is today the main bastion of support for national liberation movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America. We members of the South African liberation movement can testify to the undeviating encouragement and assistance we have received from the Soviet Union over many decades, and the draft constitution is the guarantee that this assistance will continue until we too, have secured our freedom and independence from racism, imperialism and neo-colonialism.

ANOTHER BANTUSTAN MONSTER

In spite of the failure of "independent" Transkei to win international recognition or achieve any of the objectives of the Government's policy of "separate development", a Status of Bophuthatswana Bill was pushed through the last session of Parliament in terms of which Bophuthatswana will become an "independent" state on December 6, 1977.

Unlike the Transkei, which has had some sort of regional existence ever since the turn of the century, the Bophuthatswana Bantustan has never been and never will be a recognisable separate entity. On the contrary, it is a shoddy shantytown "state" which, when first conceived, consisted of 8 large and 11 smaller Tswana reserves in the Transvaal and northern Cape, plus an enclave in the Free State. After some more stretching and pulling, as well as a number of mass evictions and resettlements of long-established African communities and the purchase of a few white farms at vastly inflated prices, Bophuthatswana will ultimately be consolidated into six separate areas in the three provinces. To visit all areas of his dominion, the Prime Minister of "independent" Bophuthatswana will have to pass through 12 border posts and have his passport stamped 12 times. But this anomaly does not disturb the Vorster Government. The Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, Mr M.C. Botha, said during the debate on the Bill that the fact that the "friendly" territory of South Africa lay between the various parts of Bophuthatswana was "the greatest bulwark against danger" for the homeland.

If this were in fact true, why should Bophuthatswana go "independent" at all? Why not local autonomy within a united South Africa? The answer to this question has been given by Prime Minister Vorster himself, who has gone on record that there is no black majority in South Africa, but a white majority living beside a mass of black labourers who had abandoned the areas in which they enjoyed political rights in order to come to work in a white country. Their work entitled them to wages, but that was all, he said. (*Rand Daily Mail*, November 12, 1976.) It is to make this fiction a legal reality that the Bantustan programme has been devised.

Thus the Status of Bophuthatswana Bill contained at its heart and

core the self-same clause, already imposed on the Transkei, whereby once Bophuthatswana attains "independence", all Africans of Tswana origin will automatically lose their South African citizenship and become citizens of Bophuthatswana. Chief Lucas Mangope says he is opposed to this clause and will not accept it. Chief Kaiser Matanzima said the same thing when the Transkei became independent. They both said the Africans should have the option of choosing South African or homeland citizenship. Both were ignored, and the all-white South African Parliament passed the Bills into law. On December 6 –unless there is a full-scale and effective revolt – Bophuthatswana, like the Transkei, will be pushed out of South Africa into the outer darkness of "independence".

It will be an extraordinary state. Of its 2 million citizens, nearly two-thirds are to be found in the ranks of that mass of black labourers who, to quote Vorster, have abandoned their own areas to come to work in white South Africa, where they can earn wages three times higher than those they could get at home – provided jobs of any sort were available, because Bophuthatswana, like all the homelands, has a scarcity of jobs and a surfeit of the unemployed. And of the 800, 000 or so Africans who do live in the six parts of Bophuthatswana, a third are not Tswana, but Zulus, Shangaans and Basotho.

Like all the other Bantustans, Bophuthatswana is not economically viable, obtaining 80 per cent of its income from South Africa. There are no fewer than 29 mines of various types in Bophuthatswana, but they are owned and managed by whites, and though after "independence" taxes and royalties will be paid to Bophuthatswana, this will still leave the territory economically dependent on South Africa, which will continue to suck in its labour force. Already about 80 per cent of the money earned by Bophuthatswana citizens is spent outside the territory because the shops and other amenities of a modern society are not available. A large proportion of the population classified as citizens of Bophuthatswana live in townships and villages which are adjacent to Pretoria and supply a large part of its labour force. They are linked as closely to Pretoria as Soweto to Johannesburg, and in any other society would be regarded as suburbanites. But deprived suburbanites. There is only one telephone for every 1, 000 people in Bophuthatswana; one doctor for every 16, 000; no qualified engineers, architects,

cost accountants, quantity-surveyors, dentists, airplane pilots, or possessors of other expertise essential for the running of an independent state; one post office for every 78, 000; and a gross domestic product which is 0.28 per cent of South Africa's.

The Transkei at least started off with a visible capital, Umtata. Bophuthatswana has nothing, although frantic attempts are being made to rush up a stadium, hotel, offices and a few other structures on a site hitherto bare veld about 5 kilometres from Mafeking where the new capital of Mnabatho is to be created. The Vorster Government is spending R20 million on this new capital, but how much of it will be finished by December 6 is uncertain. The Bophuthatswana Commissioner-General Mr Gerrie Wessels promises independence-day festivities exceeding even those of the Transkei, and says if the buildings aren't ready, a tent-town will be built to accommodate the thousands of "revellers" who are expected or ordered to attend for the occasion.

But the Bophuthatswana "independence" saga is not finished yet. Widespread hostility to the whole scheme has been manifested by the Tswana people. Only about 15 per cent of the potential voters bothered to take part in the 1972 "general election" which the government claimed as a "mandate" from the people. Another farcical election took place last August for the Legislative Assembly of 96 members (48 elected and 48 nominated), but when registration of voters closed only 375, 000 out of a total of over 1 million eligible voters had bothered to register, most of them living in the rural areas where the people are still under the domination of chiefs and headmen. The number of Tswanas living in Johannesburg and the West Rand who registered was less than 6 per cent of the total eligible. At the time of going to press the percentage poll in the August election was not known, but whatever the outcome it cannot by any stretch of the imagination be described as a mandate for anything.

On the contrary, this is essentially another case of "independence" being foisted on a people who have never been consulted about it, who have never asked for it and the majority of whom don't want it. It was no accident that the temporary buildings of the Bophuthatswana Legislative Assembly were burned to the ground during the post-Soweto disturbances of 1976. Students told the Cillie Commission

afterwards: "We burned down the Legislative Assembly because we are opposed to independence". At a conference held at Hammanskraal near Pretoria last July organised by the Black People's Convention delegates from 10 organisations called for resistance to be organised to the whole Bantustan scheme. The conference resolved: "The balkanisation of the country can only be validly carried out by the State if expressly authorised by the whole South African nation. Any decision, therefore, by any small group of people to grant independence to Bantustans is invalid". Later in the month Mangope and his ministerial colleagues were driven out of Potchefstroom by students acting in the spirit of the Hammanskraal resolution. If the mood of popular resistance continues to rise, Mangope's rule over Bophuthatswana may be ushered in to the accompaniment of a state of emergency similar to that which has made possible the domination of the Transkei by the Matanzima brothers. Significantly, a Bophuthatswana "army" of 221 men is being trained by South Africa and, it is hoped, will be ready for use by "independence day". Clearly South Africa would not train an army to fight against itself. Mangope's army, if it ever goes into action, will be directed against his own people in a bid to compel them to accept "independence" and separate development.

The Vorster Government claims that Bantustan "independence" is the only way to solve the "national question" in South Africa. It might be if the grant of independence were in response to the demand of the national liberation movement. But the opposite is the case. The ANC demands national liberation and majority rule within the framework of a united South Africa, which has been created largely by black labour and whose wealth, in terms of the Freedom Charter, belongs to all who live in it irrespective of race, creed or colour. The "independence" offered by Vorster amounts not to the grant but to the theft of a country from its rightful owners. That is something our people can never accept.

DEATH OF A DISUNITED PARTY

The decision of the United Party to vote itself out of existence last

June has ended an inglorious chapter in the history of white politics. The party was formed in December 1934, a direct and logical consequence of the coalition government formed by Smuts and Hertzog in February 1933. The merger had two main objects: (1) to overcome the economic crisis through which the country was passing in the wake of the world-wide depression; and (2) to place the so-called Hertzog Bills on the statute book removing the Cape Africans from the common voters' roll, prohibiting the further acquisition of land by Africans in the "white" 87 per cent of the country and limiting the extent of the African reserves to the 13 per cent which now constitute the so-called homelands or Bantustans.

The United Party was in power under Hertzog until the outbreak of world war 2 in 1939 and under Smuts until 1948, and at all times had the opportunity but not the will to bring about fundamental changes in South Africa, to extend the franchise, eliminate discrimination and lay the foundations of a system which would have promoted the development of all sections of the population – and have prevented the Nationalist election victory in 1948. It never attempted this task because it was fundamentally a party representing the big business interests of the ruling class and its imperialist allies and its major concern was to maintain white domination and maximalise the exploitation of labour and profit-taking. Smuts' ruthless massacre of the African mineworkers striking in 1946 for 10s a day, and his notorious act of the same year pegging Indian land purchase and touching off a historic passive resistance campaign, were typical of his regime.

The shock of the 1948 election defeat and the endless years of opposition taught the United Party nothing. It opposed the policies of the Nationalist Party not on principle but because it believed apartheid would undermine the security of the capitalist system and provoke the masses to revolt. Though year by year it became more and more obvious that so long as the franchise was restricted to whites there was less and less chance of the Nationalist Party being defeated at the polls, the United Party never moved towards demanding an extension of the franchise, let alone universal suffrage. It opposed the removal of the Coloured voters from the common roll in the long Parliamentary battles of the 1950's and 1960's, but later reneged on its promise to restore their franchise rights if it was ever returned to office. It opposed the administrative restrictions and no-trial detention laws introduced

by successive Nationalist Justice Ministers not because it was soft on subversives, but because it believed the proper punishment for Communists was not imprisonment but hanging.

If the world finds the principles of the Nationalist Government odious, in our view the United Party's total lack of principle was equally offensive. It was essentially a party of opportunism, aiming to return to power by subverting the "left wing" of the Nationalist Party. In the process it was forced to adopt more and more of the policies which regularly won the support of the voters at the polls. Its racial federation policy was merely Bantustans in disguise. It co-operated in the notorious witch-hunt of the Schlebusch Commission. It at all times proclaimed its adherence to "white leadership", a euphemism for white domination and racial discrimination.

The country-wide disturbances of 1976 touched off by the police massacre in Soweto made the United Party fear that the revolution against which it had constantly warned was about to happen. The UP leader De Villiers Graaff launched his "Save South Africa" campaign, designed to bring together moderate men of all parties and none which would have a reasonable chance of replacing the Nationalist Government in power. He sought the assistance of ex-judges, big businessmen and academics, as well as rootless and derelict politicians like the Democratic Party's Theo Gerdener. He even hoped to win back some of his foremost opportunists and rats who had deserted the UP for the Progressive Reform Party because they thought this was the only way they stood a chance of keeping their seats in Parliament. But at no stage did he ever think of consultation or co-operation with blacks. After all, blacks don't have votes.

It was a fruitless exercise because what was missing was any coherent alternative policy to that of the ruling Nationalist Party. The result was, not the creation of a huge mass movement which would have turned the Nationalists out of office, but the shattering of the United Party into its component parts. When Graaff launched his campaign, the UP had 36 seats in the Assembly. At the time of writing the rump of the Party, under its new name the New Republic Party, had been reduced to 24, with 6 moving off to the right and 6 to the left. Further fragmentation is inevitable as the polarisation of the white voters continues.

No democrat, then, can mourn the passing of the United Party. Nor should it be thought that the ferment in the ranks of the parliamentary

white opposition will result in the emergence of a party committed to principled opposition to apartheid and white supremacy. The hard fact is that not one of the contending factions supports majority rule, described by the leader of the Progressive Reform Party, Colin Eglin, as a "simplistic concept" which is rejected by the PRP because it is a recipe for "race domination" by the black majority. For the parliamentary whites, "one man one vote" is nowhere on the agenda.

The harrowing events of the past year have confirmed that the only principled and effective opposition to apartheid is coming from the black masses in action outside the framework of Parliament. With no seats at stake and no votes to count, they are more and more turning to the path of struggle outlined 16 years ago in the manifesto of Umkhonto we Sizwe and supported by the African National Congress and the Communist Party. Daily events prove there simply is no other way forward.

FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN ZAIRE

The South African Communist Party has joined with a number of other Communist Parties in issuing a statement condemning the imperialist intervention in Zaire. The statement reads:

"We the undersigned Communist and Workers' Parties from African and Arab countries vehemently condemn imperialist especially French imperialist and reactionary intervention in Zaire.

"Imperialism in particular US imperialism is now trying under the conditions of its general crisis which includes the policy of neo-colonialism to defend its interests also through the heinous policy of pitting people against people.

"It is within this framework that the authorities in Morocco, Egypt and Sudan by sending troops, military exports and by offering all kinds of assistance have with racist South Africa and Zionist Israel intervened in the internal conflict in Zaire.

"We categorically refute and reject the baseless imperialist and reactionary allegation of Soviet and Cuban involvement in the internal affairs of Zaire. The Socialist world remains the most consistent, natural and dependable ally of the peoples of Africa.

"The African and Arab Communists calls upon the people of Africa to be fully aware of the dangers arising from this imperialist and reactionary conspiracy.

"We call upon the people of Africa to intensify the struggle for national liberation, freedom, social progress and peace."

The statement was signed by the African Independence Party of Senegal; Communist Party of Lebanon; Egyptian Communist Party; Iraqi Communist Party; Jordanian Communist Party; Communist Party of Lesotho; South African Communist Party; Socialist Vanguard Party of Algeria; Syrian Communist Party; and Communist Party of the Sudan.

OCTOBER LIVES ON IN SOUTH AFRICA

by John Lenkoe

The Great October Socialist Revolution whose 60th anniversary is being celebrated this year was an event of profound and universal significance and its impact was felt and is still being felt in every corner of the world without exception. The reverberations from the cruiser Aurora echoed everywhere and South Africa was aware of them as well.

The way in which the revolution was received by the various socialist groups in South Africa was described by Z. Nkosi in the last issue of *The African Communist*. It should not be forgotten that the remarkable insight shown by the South African marxists of the day was achieved in the face of a torrent of lies and misinformation from the bourgeois press, then as now owned by the great monopoly mining interests which dominate the economy, and which was predicting the imminent collapse and overthrow of the "Maximalist" government -- as they mis-translated "Bolsheviks".

The International Socialist League, the most important of the social-ist organisations, was the product of the bitter class struggles which had

developed in South Africa since the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley in 1867 and gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 and the barbaric exploitation of labour, both immigrant and indigenous, by the huge mining monopolies, financed by British and international imperialism, and headed by such pirates as Cecil Rhodes.

Fighting back against the mineowners and other exploiters the white workers – many of them immigrants from Britain and other capitalist countries – formed trade unions which fought a number of militant struggles.

In 1910, with British backing, the four South African colonies (Cape, Natal, Orange River and Transvaal) joined to establish the self-governing Union of South Africa. The trade unions joined with small socialist societies to set up the South African Labour Party.

From the start weaknesses attended the birth of this pioneer labour movement of the African continent.

The Union of South Africa, like the four colonies which preceded it, was erected on the basis of the imperialist military conquest of the indigenous African population, the wholesale robbery of their lands, their merciless subjugation and oppression.

The Legislative Assembly established by the South Africa Act, passed by the British Parliament in 1909, provided for the vote to be exercised, with insignificant exceptions, by men of "pure European descent". Thus, in South Africa as in Rhodesia sixty years later, the conceding of "independence" meant merely the transfer of power from the imperial power to a local white minority even more implacably opposed to the rights and freedom of the indigenous people, the rightful masters of the country.

Landlessness, hunger and discriminatory poll-taxes – deliberately designed for this purpose – forced Africans off the land to work for wretched wages on the mines and other white-owned enterprises. Here, even more than the Indian and Coloured workers, who suffered similar treatment, they were confined to the most arduous, ill-paid and unhealthy occupations. The great De Beers monopoly at Kimberley had begun the atrocious "compound system" – still an ugly feature of the lives of more than half a million African workers – whereby miners work on contract, away from their families, fenced into giant military-style barracks which make their lives more like that of convicts than of working men.

The trade unions in the early years of this century were organisations exclusively of white men. Their function was twofold. On the one hand they fought to maintain their wages and conditions against the employers. On the other hand, they fought against their black fellow-workers, to prevent them entering skilled trades. Rarely, if ever, did they extend a helping hand to the oppressed Africans against their intolerable conditions.

The Labour Party, at the beginning, reflected this backward and narrow racialist outlook. Since its main purpose was to win parliamentary representation, and since only whites could vote, it pandered to the endemic white chauvinism which infected the workers as much as other sections of the electorate.

Moreover, the Labour Party was by no means united ideologically. Like the British Labour Party, on which it was largely modelled, it embraced reformists and revolutionaries, socialist and anti-socialists. Even the revolutionary sections comprised not only Marxists, but also anarchists and syndicalists, followers of the American de Leon whose slogans of "industrial unionism" (i.e. opposition to political action) were at that time popular among radical workers throughout the English-speaking world.

Turning Point

A great turning point took place with the outbreak of the imperialist war in 1914. A section, including Bill Andrews, leader of the parliamentary caucus and chairman of the Labour Party, the Secretary-General Ivon Jones and S.P. Bunting, stood for adherence to the principles of the Basle declaration of the Second International for opposition to the war. But right wing elements launched a campaign of jingoism behind the Smuts-Botha government backing British imperialism. A split took place in which the anti-war leaders and their supporters established the International Socialist League outside of and separate from the Labour Party. Its leaders moved consistently towards revolutionary Marxism.

Quite a separate path had been followed by the national liberation movements of the oppressed black peoples: the African National Congress, founded in 1912 and perhaps the oldest surviving African national movement; the African People's Organisation, mouthpiece of

the Coloured people in the Western Cape, and the South African Indian Congress, founded by Mahatma Ghandi in 1894 when he was in South Africa.

By and large the leaders of these organisations decided for support of Britain in the war. To criticise them severely for such decisions would be to ignore the historical nature of the times when the decisions were taken. Inevitably, like similar leaders of all colonised people, at that period they were drawn from the middle and professional classes. They had struggled hard to lay the foundations of national dignity and resurgence among their people. They had little contact or sympathy with the white labour leaders whose chauvinism could but repel them. Though the interests of their people had repeatedly and grievously been betrayed by British imperialism, they no doubt hoped that their "loyalty" (as contrasted with the open pro-German feelings of the Boer nationalists) would be rewarded in the event of an Allied victory; and also that their people would be able to acquire skill in the use of modern weapons while serving in the armed forces. Both hopes were to be disappointed. The South African government, as in the Second World War, recruited black troops for non-combatant duties only and refused to equip them with arms or train them in their use. And Britain after the war maintained its "traditional" policy of backing the white communities in Southern Africa.

The lesson, both of this disappointment and of the great workers' revolution in Russia, with its unqualified opposition to all forms of imperialism and race discrimination, was not lost on the African people and their leaders.

On November 15, 1917 a delegation of the African National Congress, headed by its President, S.M. Makgatho, met the Prime Minister, General Botha, to protest against the terms of the proposed Native Administration Bill – which contained many of the fascist, anti-African provisions which were introduced by subsequent South African governments.

Botha warned the African leaders that the International Socialist League was agitating for a general strike against the Bill, and asked them to dissociate themselves from this call. But President Makgatho replied that unless the Bill was withdrawn a general strike would certainly take place.

The Bill was withdrawn by the government. This early example of

the need for militant action and resistance to anti-Communist promptings from the oppressors was to be repeated many times in subsequent years. In March 1918, 100, 000 African workers on the Witwatersrand gold mines downed tools and refused to resume work until their demands had been met. This and other actions of a similar sort were signs of the great revival of working class political organisation which took place under the direct influence and example of the October Revolution.

The dynamic impact of the October Revolution was by no means limited to the immediate stimulus it gave to revolutionary Marxist-Leninist organisations and tendencies in our country, which in 1921 merged to form the Communist Party of South Africa.

Even more important, in the long run, has been the influence of the ideas and principles of the Revolution, the creative, revolutionary direction imparted to our country's struggle for liberation by contact with and study of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist International.

The Communist Party, as we have seen, grew out of the revolutionary wing of the labour and trade union movement, which has broken with the Social Democratic leadership over the issue of their support for the Botha-Smuts leadership in the imperialist war. The organised labour movement at that time consisted of members of the white section of the working class, most of them deeply infected with the sickness of white chauvinism. These workers were, at best, indifferent, at worst outspokenly hostile to the masses of oppressed and exploited African and other black peoples. Certainly the outstanding Marxists among the leaders who founded our Party, breaking with the rabidly white-supremacist Labour Party, fought hard against such anti-working class ideas, but it would be naive to imagine that many of the rank and file at that time were able immediately to emancipate their minds from this deeply-rooted disability.

National Liberation

An invaluable part was played by the Communist International in this respect, particularly by the study and absorption of Lenin's profound analysis of the national question and the national liberation movement. Applied to the South African situation, and expressed in the 1962 Pro-

gramme of the Party, *The Road to South African Freedom,* this analysis makes it clear that the primary duty of Communists in a country such as ours is to fight for the national liberation of the African majority from the vicious type of colonialism embodied in the political, economic and social structure of South Africa and carried to its obnoxious extremes under the neo-Nazi rule of the Nationalist Party of Verwoerd and Vorster.

The building of socialism in the Soviet Union, accompanied by the vast achievements which have carried the first workers' and peasants' state to the front ranks among modern powers; the glorious victory of Soviet arms in the Second World War which saved the peoples of all countries from the horrors of a fascist world; the spread of communist power to one country after another until today one third of the world's peoples live under socialism and can contrast their steady improvement of their living and working conditions with the atmosphere of crisis, conflict and decline in the capitalist world; the growing strength and influence of the international Communist movement and its firm policy of internationalism, support for the anti-imperialist struggle of the oppressed peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America – all these factors have exerted a profound influence on the African National Congress and other liberation movements of the oppressed sections of the South African population.

In 1927 the President General of the African National Congress, J.T. Gumede, visited the Soviet Union. On his return he reported that he had been received as though he was the Prime Minister of South Africa. He told the people that he had been to the "New Jerusalem", a land of equality and freedom. The right-wing old guard in Congress rallied and succeeded in removing him from the Presidency at the next conference. But their days were numbered. Industrialisation in South Africa, accompanied by mounting racial discrimination and persecution of the movement, led to an ever-increasing presence in the Congress alliance of workers and peasants and its desertion by careerist middle class elements. Leading African Communists like Moses Kotane, the late Albert Nzula and J.B. Marks were elected to leading positions in the ANC, and the Indian community elected the brilliant communist and liberation fighter, Dr Y.M. Dadoo (now chairman of the South African Communist Party) as President of the South African Indian Congress. The firm and unbreakable unity of communists and non-communists in the

national liberation struggle which was established at that time has survived and grown stronger with the years, sealed in a thousand battles, in jails, in illegality, in endless trials and in exile and bonded by the blood of the martyrs murdered by the brutal apartheid regime.

Today, when the repression of the vicious Vorster regime has compelled the people to resort to armed combat in addition to other forms of mass struggle, the Communists and non-Communists of the South African liberation movement are united in their support of Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the fighting detachment of the movement.

The Rest of Africa

The experience of South Africa has been paralleled by that of the rest of the continent of Africa and the rest of the vast area of the world's surface which was colonised by imperialism, and which still suffers the terrible consequences of colonialism and neo-colonialism. North Africa was swept into the revolutionary wave that spread through Europe and Asia after the first world war and the Russian Revolution. In Alexandria in 1919, on the eve of the national revolution, the workers established soviets. The Alexandrian transport and dock workers then decided to set up a Communist Party, which spread to Cairo and carried on educational and organisational work in Egypt until it was suppressed by the government in 1924.

Likewise in Morocco a national movement sprang up, fighting the Rif war against French imperialism; and similar movements arose, national-liberationist in form but triggered off by the revolutionary spirit of the times, in Algeria, Tunis and Sudan. It is significant that in each of these countries, in due course, the revolutionary workers created their own class party, the Communist Party. From this period too dates the rise of struggles in Tripoli against Italian colonialism.

During the 1920s many African patriots were sent by their fellow workers to study scientific socialism in the Soviet Union, among them men who were to become prominent statesmen in their countries.

Still more important was the practical example to the African masses of the outstanding achievements of the Soviet State and its consistent anti-colonialist policy. If today in the whole of independent Africa no leader dares to advocate capitalism, and the masses ardently support

socialism as their goal, this is in no small measure due to the glorious consequences of October 1917, the wonderful successes of the Soviet people, led by the Communist Party, in solving its own national problem and transforming a land of backwardness to one of dramatic and unprecedented progress in every field of human endeavour, no less than to the powerful support given by the Soviet government in every aspect of the hard and still continuing struggle to liberate Africa from imperialism.

From the time of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, to the days of Arab resistance to imperialist and Israeli aggression, in 1956, 1967, 1973 and still today, culminating in the recent period in the collapse of the Portuguese empire and the establishment of the independence of Guine Bissau, Mozambique and especially Angola, the peoples of Africa have been given many practical demonstrations that the socialist world, and in the first place the Soviet Union, is an immensely powerful and reliable bulwark of support for those who are fighting for their liberation, and against imperialism.

The European Communist Parties that sprang up under the impact of the October Socialist Revolution have also been a strong source of encouragement and enlightenment to the peoples of Africa. Communist Parties like those of Britain, France and Portugal have stood up valiantly to the vicious colonial wars, plots and conspiracies launched against Africa by their imperialist ruling classes – and here we shall never forget the fine stand taken by the Italian Communist Party, though then itself illegal, against Mussolini's aggression in Ethiopia; nor the inspiring and unrelenting struggle of the illegal Communist Party of Portugal which played a big part in bringing about the collapse of the fascist Caetano regime in Portugal in 1974, opening the way to independence for her colonies. These Parties have also helped, especially through their publications, to train many of the militant African leaders who today are leading figures in their countries' independent governments.

Nor has this fraternal support emanated only from Europe. With the development of the strength of the international Communist movement, and in the true spirit of proletarian internationalism, the peoples of Africa have been strengthened and assisted in their fight against imperialism and neo-colonialism by the world-wide forces of Communism. The most noble demonstration of disinterested assistance to the fighting people of Africa was provided by the international Communist

movement, and especially by the people of Cuba, in the Angolan war of 1975/76 which resulted in the overwhelming defeat of the forces of imperialism, racism and counter-revolution. The international Communist movement is still today the main ally of the Angolan people in their fight to maintain the independence of their government against the counter-revolutionary forces promoted by the racists and imperialists. And this applies to Africa as a whole.

We may be permitted to claim that the South African Communist Party too, though always engaged in a hard and bitter struggle against terror and repression, has helped to spread the invigorating ideas of the October Revolution far and wide in Africa through its work and its publications. The South African Communist Party, from its inception in 1921, has been in the forefront of the national liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples of South Africa, and has played no small part in assisting the development of the national liberation movement in many neighbouring race-dominated territories. The organ of the SACP, *The African Communist,* enjoys a widespread and ever-increasing readership in very many countries of Africa.

The Dangers of Neo-Colonialism

Thus it becomes clear that the October Revolution and its far-reaching consequences, both direct and indirect, have made a tremendous contribution towards assisting the peoples of Africa in their long and many-sided struggles for independence. For many peoples these struggles have succeeded in establishing nominal and constitutional independence. But, as the African people have learnt through bitter experience, formal "independence" alone does not always confer the substance of true self-determination. Imperialism still holds powerfully entrenched positions in most African countries. It retains key positions in their economies. Where these positions have been threatened, it has not hesitated to intervene directly to preserve its ill-gotten gains, as in Zaire, Angola and elsewhere. In the wake of their defeat in Angola and Mozambique, the racists and imperialists are joining hands to help preserve the last bastions of white domination in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa itself.

Regrettably, in many African countries, the imperialists have found allies and agents among the feudal and tribal aristocracy, among the

parasitic bourgeoisie, among the corrupt, "western"-orientated, educated and trained military and administrative "elite". Often (though with shining exceptions) these have seen in independence merely a means of enriching themselves and replacing the former imperialist military and civil apparatus as beneficiaries from the oppression of their own people. Where genuinely patriotic governments existed, determined to follow political with economic independence, these sections of Africans have conspired with the imperialists against their own people, to carry out coups and other forms of treason. Often, under the cover of patriotic and even socialist slogans, they have connived at the extension of neo-colonialist influence and capitalist tendencies in African countries. In South Africa we may number in their ranks those who support the Government's Bantustan policies, falsely claiming to be promoting the "independence" of their ethnic group at the cost of the surrender of their claims to citizenship, national liberation, equal rights and opportunities in the land of their birth which has been built up on the labour of the oppressed peoples – South Africa, which in the words of the Freedom Charter adopted by the liberation movement at Kliptown in 1955, "belongs to all who live in it, black and white".

On the other hand it must be said theat the healthy, working class, peasant and patriotic elements in every country in Africa are learning through their own experiences that hard and relentless struggle for economic and social, as well as political emancipation is the only road to real independence. They are learning that genuine democracy – based on the full participation of the masses of working people at every level – cannot be secured along the path of bourgeois parliamentarism, as advocated by the colonialists. And they are learning that scientific socialism is the only road to Africa's freedom, unity and equality among the peoples of the world.

These hard-learnt lessons are exemplified in the policies of the anti-imperialist and revolutionary African countries, both those which have taken the first steps along the non-capitalist path and those which have outrightly declared their support for scientific socialism according to the principles of Marxism-Leninism. In West Africa Guinea, Mali and Congo have dealt heavy blows against imperialism and its indigenous agents, while Nigeria has recently taken steps to Africanise key sectors of the country's economy. In the East, Ethiopia has seen the collapse

of the feudal regime and the charting of a new path forward by the revolutionary government; Somalia has seen the founding of the Revolutionary Socialist Party to translate the economic and political aspirations of the masses into reality. In Angola, Guine Bissau and Mozambique the governments of people's power restore the ravages of war and commence to build a new life. Tanzania strives to implement the Arusha Declaration for socialism. In Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa a new round of battles, armed and otherwise, has commenced against the white supremacists and their Western backers. In the Sudan, the illegal Communist Party, surviving the murderous assault of the Nimeiry government, rallies the masses for a new round of struggle to establish popular power. Everywhere the seeds of socialism spread by the wind of October 1917 are taking root in Africa, leading to the growth and development of consciousness, struggle, the formation of vanguard parties.

The rapid surge forward of all humanity towards a higher social plane which was made possible by the great October Revolution has fully justified the optimism and ecstasy expressed by *The International* in far-away Johannesburg in 1917. A third of the world's peoples have already chosen socialism, and led by Communist Parties are marching towards a future free from exploitation, war, poverty, inflation, unemployment and national oppression, the dreadful scars which mar the withered face of capitalist society today. During the past 60 years, the Communist Movement, basing itself on the revolutionary principles of Marx, Engels and Lenin, has made greater advances and won more adherents than any political movement in the whole of human history. Its ultimate victory is assured.

Forces of Counter-Revolution

But it has not been, and will not be, an easy victory. From its outset the Communist movement has met with the bitterest resistance from the forces of reaction, from those who profit from the poverty and exploitation of others and do not want to see the world change. "Tsar, Metternich, Pope and Guizot....", as Marx and Engels wrote in the *Communist Manifesto* – all the powers of old Europe united against the Communist movement at its birth. The Soviet Republic, from its establishment, met fierce, armed resistance and hatred from all imperialist

powers, who forcibly intervened in a fruitless bid to stop the revolution in its tracks.

Our movement was born in struggle, and as in all struggles, has known not only advances but bitter setbacks. Since 1917 we have seen fascism, arising first in Italy and then in Germany, conquer Spain, Czechoslovakia and then practically the whole of Europe, driving all workers' and democratic parties underground, slaughtering the flower of the working class, and forcing the defenders of the revolutionary heartland back to the very banks of the Volga River.

But never, even in the darkest hour, did we doubt that victory would be won.

In the period since the end of the second world war, our movement has undergone further trials. We have seen the ferocious American assaults on Korea and Vietnam, the Israeli aggression aided by the imperialists against the Arab peoples of the Middle East, the nightmare of the rule of the colonels in Greece, the CIA-aided murder of the Allende regime and the inauguration of the bloodthirsty era of the Pinochet junta. In the interests of maintaining the capitalist system, the imperialists have ceaselessly mounted a counter-offensive against the popular forces throughout the world, using methods ranging from outright military intervention to intrigues, assassinations and military coups to oust patriotic leaders in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Everywhere the imperialists prop-up the most reactionary elements in societies faced with revolutionary change, and in the name of anti-communism ally themselves with the dregs of fascist and backward-looking ruling cliques. In Southern Africa, under the false pretence of promoting majority rule, the imperialists try to rescue the regimes of Smith and Vorster from the assault of the national liberation movements which aim to end forever the exploitation of man by man, race discrimination and oppression by local and foreign profit-seekers.

The imperialist counter-offensive in many of these countries has been smashed on the ramparts of proletarian resolve, and we can gratefully record in the most recent period the expulsion of the Americans from Vietnam and the destruction of the Portuguese empire in Africa as the most signal victories for the forces of peace and progress throughout the world. But elsewhere, too, the rising tide of progressive humanity advances. The era of the colonels in Greece has ended, opening the way for wider struggle for democratic reform. The death of

Franco has been followed by the advance of the popular forces in Spain. The Helsinki agreement of 1975 foreshadowed the end of the cold war, and lifted from the brows of mankind the fear of imminent nuclear conflict.

Call for Anti-Imperialist Unity

Further rapid advances would become possible if the divisions in the ranks of anti-imperialist forces, and even in the ranks of the world communist movement, could be healed. The initiative today is in the hands of the fighting masses everywhere, and the imperative of the present time is to restore the unity of ideology, perspective and strategy of the Communist movement as the core of revolutionary change. A great advance in this sphere was registered at the Berlin conference of European Communist parties in June 1976. The consolidation of forces registered there must now be followed by the convening of an international communist conference which would co-ordinate the thought and action of the most militant contingent of the international revolutionary movement.

For South African fighters for the freedom of our people, this is no abstract or academic question. Over 20 million black South Africans suffer the most brutal oppression and indignity, and this repression extends to increasing sections of the white population itself who are prepared to challenge the apartheid regime. But the signs are not lacking that our people are ready to undertake their historic revolutionary mission of breaking the bonds which bind them, shattering the white supremacist state and building a new social order based on majority rule, one man one vote, equal rights and opportunities for all flowing from social ownership of the means of production and distribution. The mass popular upsurge which has been witnessed from end to end of our country since June 16, 1976, when police first fired on schoolchildren demonstrating against the injustices of Bantu Education, shows that the lesson of October 1917 has been learnt and is being more and more applied in practice by our people. The arduous and dangerous work carried out in conditions of illegality by the African National Congress and the Communist Party is bearing fruit.

Though racked by contradictions and increasingly under pressure both internally and externally, the apartheid state is still strong. In the

recent period, thousands of the most courageous freedom fighters have been mercilessly shot down by the police, detained without trial, tortured and victimised, driven into exile. Some of the finest sons and daughters of our people are suffering the most barbarous treatment and indignities in Vorster's fascist jails. Already martyred in prison is the outstanding Communist leader Bram Fischer, Lenin Prize Laureate for 1967 – one of an increasing number of whites who are casting in their lot with the oppressed masses and serving in the ranks of the liberation army. Among South Africans and Namibians serving life sentences in jail are people's leaders Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Denis Goldberg; many thousands of others are jailed for lesser periods. Over 50 of those detained under the country's security laws have been done to death by their torturers in the recent period.

We ask not only for solidarity with our fighting people. We call upon all our comrades for united action to ensure fresh advances in the common struggle against imperialism, fascism and racism, for socialism, freedom, peace and national liberation. Only thus can we put an end rapidly to the sufferings of our people, and win in the near future fresh triumphs along the glorious road to the victory of the proletariat and the liberation of mankind.

That path was opened up decisively on November 7, 1917. To us South Africans, as to all people who treasure peace and feedom, that day signifies, in the words of our late national chairman J.B. Marks, the day when "modern world history began". As we look back with pride, and treasure the memory of the great Lenin and his comrades who made possible the great victory of 60 years ago, let us also look forward to the future with confidence and determination that we shall be worthy followers and continuers of the glorious cause for which they fought.

On the various forms of Revolutionary Struggle

by Vusizwe Seme

Just prior to the Fourth Anniversary of the Great October Revolution, Lenin commented: "The farther that great day recedes from us, the more clearly we see the significance of the proletarian revolution in Russia, and the more deeply we reflect upon the practical experience of our work as a whole." (*Coll. Works,* Vol. 33, p. 51). Today we can see even more clearly the everlasting significance for all humanity of the mightiest revolution in history. It is a fitting and great tribute to the Party, people and government of the Soviet Union that this anniversary should be celebrated on an international scale.

The October Revolution was a turning point in world history fundamentally transforming the development of the world revolutionary process. The science of Marxism-Leninism has penetrated all corners of our globe and is the most dynamic and forceful ideology guiding mankind towards a brighter future.

The rich and multisided experience accumulated by the Bolsheviks in the period prior to October and the subsequent experience of con-

structing socialism contains general regularities as well as its own specific aspects. As Marxist-Leninists we have an absolutely historic approach to the question of forms of struggle. Proceeding from a dialectical analysis and examination of the concrete situation at a given moment of time and at the given stage of development we do not absolutise this or that form of struggle.

As Lenin the greatest revolutionary theoretician and strategist points out:

> **"In the first place, Marxism differs from all primitive forms of socialism by not binding the movement to any one particular form of struggle. It recognises the most varied forms of struggle; and it does not concoct them, but only generalises, organises, gives conscious expression to those forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which arise of themselves in the course of the movement.... Under no circumstances does Marxism confine itself to the forms of struggle possible and in existence at the given moment only, recognising as it does that new forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the given period, *inevitably* arise as the given social situation changes."** (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 11, p. 213).

The science of revolution elaborated by Lenin and his colleagues, and their successors, covers the entire spectrum of the revolutionary process, from the overthrow of the obsolete social order and the unprecedented task of creating a new one, to the more elementary but indispensable questions of organisation and agitation.

The October Revolution irrefutably demonstrated the legitimacy of armed revolutionary struggle. Since then armed revolutionary struggle was successfully carried out in China, Indo-China, Cuba, Algeria, Mozambique, Angola, Guinea Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands.

There is of course no Chinese Wall between different forms of struggle, violent and non-violent, legal and illegal, spontaneous and the conscious purposive actions of the masses. The form of struggle adopted by one or other Party is based on the precise correlation of class forces both nationally and internationally. Whatever method is chosen the most crucial factor is the ever-deepening class struggle occurring in the context of the transition from capitalism to socialism. There is no such thing as a "pure" form of revolution since whatever form is utilised, be it peaceful or non-peaceful, elements of both are ever present.

In the conditons obtaining in racist South Africa, where the ANC

and the SACP had exhausted the potential of non-violent struggle, where the fascist regime had instituted a veritable reign of terror, where the oppressed masses were denied even the most elementary rights of bourgeois democracy, there was after the events in Sharpeville in 1960 and the banning of the ANC no other way forward. The decision to engage in armed struggle was not taken lightly. Communists pursue the most humane goals and abhor violence for violence sake. But in the situation prevailing in South Africa revolutionary violence is not only a sacred right but the sacred duty of the revolutionary movements.

Recently the US imperialist ambassador to the United Nations Andy Young has been strutting around Southern Africa spreading the gospel of the peaceful transformation of the racist and colonialist regimes in Southern Africa. Young's mission is designed amongst other objectives, to disarm and isolate the genuine national liberation movements both nationally and internationally, to help to create a more pliable and reformist opposition amongst the blacks and above all to seek such changes in Southern Africa as would protect and promote the interests of the imperialists and monopolists in South Africa. To speak of a peaceful gradual change in South Africa is to render the revolutionary forces ineffective. As the most recent statement of the CC of the SACP points out:

> "During the course of the historic months of resistance, all pacifist illusions and talk of non-violent change – so assiduously fostered by imperialist interests, the liberals, the Bantustan stooges and other collaborators among our people – have been totally shattered, by the reality of the regime's bloody repression. It is now clearer than ever to our people that the only answer to the brute violence of our ruling class is the organised might of the masses, directed and led by the national liberation movement, in which armed struggle must play a key role. It is, therefore, one of the supreme tasks of our revolutionary alliance to ensure that the armed struggle establishes firm roots in every part of our country."

Whatever combination of methods and forms of struggle are used, Marxist-Leninists always evaluate revolutions as "the locomotive of history", as social political upheavals fundamentally changing and restructuring all social organisms. It is the political, economic, and ideological class character of any society that in the final analysis determines the objective causes and the content of any revolution. The basic criterion of every revolution is the winning of state political power by the

most progressive and revolutionary class and its allies. As Lenin points out:

> "The passing of state power from one class to another is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a *revolution*, both in the strictly scientific and in the practical political meaning of that term." (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 24, p. 44).

The rich experience of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries has indisputably established that once having conquered power the revolutionary forces led by their vanguard Parties should be capable of defending it. No ruling class in history has ever voluntarily relinquished its class domination and rule. Using the most flexible strategy the working class and its allies should be ready to move from one form of struggle to another and be prepared to use all necessary means to defend the gains and interests of the working people. As comrade Ponomaryov has commented on the Chilean experience:

> "It follows that the events in Chile are a further reminder of the importance of maintaining revolutionary gains, of the tremendous importance of being prepared promptly to change forms of struggle, peaceful and non-peaceful, of the ability to repel the counter-revolutionary violence of the bourgeoisie with revolutionary violence. The peaceful development of the revolution is guaranteed not only be an alignment of social forces under which the bourgeoisie would not venture to start a civil war, but by the constant preparedness of the revolutionary vanguard and the masses – in deed and not in words – to use the boldest means of struggle should the situation require it."

A Marxist-Leninist analysis and examination of the different forms of revolutionary struggle categorically refutes and rejects right and left-wing revisionism and opportunism which seeks either to dampen the class struggle or to take a rigid voluntarist approach.

Flying in the face of history and life itself the present leaders in China have stepped up their demagogic and aggressive campaign against the Soviet Union, the Socialist World and the International Communist Movement. On issues of great importance such as the fight for peace and detente, the struggle against racism and fascism and for national and social liberation, the Chinese leaders pursuing the policy of anti-Sovietism end up on the same side of the barricades as the most reactionary sections of monopoly capital. It is clear therefore that anti-Sovietism in whatever form, guise and however subtly expressed leads

inevitably to a departure from the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. It would be a dereliction of our revolutionary duty as Communists and fighters for peace, freedom and socialism if we were to remain silent about the dangerous anti-Soviet activities of the present rulers in China.

The October Revolution blazed the trail into the future and created the greatest prospects for the advance of the international working class and revolutionary forces. The Soviet Union bore and still bears the greatest single burden in the struggle against imperialism, monopoly capitalism, fascism, and the warmongers. Humanity can never forget that the Soviet people at the enormous cost of 20 million lives and immense economic losses saved mankind from fascism. For us Communists it is of special significance that of the 20 million, 3 million were Communists. The Soviet Communists displayed in the heat of battle all the exemplary virtues of patriotism, heroism, self-sacrifice, unity and discipline which are the hallmarks of all great revolutionaries.

Due to the immense sacrifices of the Soviet people there opened up the possibilities of not only creating but also building and defending the greatest achievement of the international working class, the world socialist system.

Throughout the anti-colonial, anti-racist struggle the CPSU has disinterestedly offered political, economic and military assistance to the national liberation movements in Africa. At the present stage of the struggle for social liberation the independent states of Africa have in the Soviet Union the most reliable ally and bulwark. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries seek no one-sided concessions, military bases, factories, land or investment opportunities. The exceptionally complex struggle for social liberation free from the fetters of imperialist and neo-colonialist domination requires the greatest possible cooperation between the revolutionary forces in Africa and the socialist community. The defeat of the racist imperialist aggression by the people of Angola with the assistance of Cuba, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries demonstrated in action the vital necessity of such cooperation.

HOW THE ANGOLA COUP WAS CRUSHED

On July 12, 1977, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of MPLA issued in Luanda a 29-page statement analysing the origins and development of the attempted coup d'etat on May 27 and showing how the popular forces were rallied to defeat the splitters. The statement, and the harsh experience on which it is based, contain profound lessons for all revolutionaries, not only in Africa but throughout the world. The following are extracts from the statement.

The tangled web that led to the reactionary attempted coup d'etat by splitters on May 27th has been almost completely unravelled. The attempted coup was quickly crushed by MPLA militants, members of FAPLA (the army) and DISA (the security services), with the support of the masses.

· The real origins and objectives of the coup are to be found in the complexities of the counter-revolutionary process.

However it is clear that a number of ex-prisoners from the old "Sao Nicolau" camp, led by Ze Van Dunem, and a handful of leaders from the 1st Region, headed by Nito Alves, had strange connections from the

days immediately following the overthrow of colonialist fascism. And from the September 1974 Inter-Regional Conference of Militants these connections came to be characterized by political activity as a group, outside MPLA structures but always under cover of MPLA.

The election of the two leaders to the Central Committee was precisely the result of group action and was helped by the times – the forthcoming end of the colonial war and the imperialist offensive against MPLA, including its offensive via the so-called "Active Revolt" and "Eastern Revolt", developed within the Movement to the benefit of the FNLA and UNITA puppets.

Mixing at first with other splitter groups (like the Amilcar Cabral Committees and the Benda Committees and others), the Nito Alves/Ze Van Dunem group, which used them as a springboard, began to gain ground after neutralizing its competitors. In this neutralization it gave its active support to the MPLA leadership.

Once these rival competing groups had been neutralized, the Nito Alves/Ze Van Dunem group took advantage of the circumstance that Nito Alves had been invited to take part in the Political Bureau meetings during the Second War of Liberation, and was later appointed Minister of the Interior, in order not only to try to control MPLA structures and the provincial organs of Government, but also to start building a parallel structure using militants in its confidence a large number of whom were Portuguese who claimed to be the watchdogs of a "pure Marxist Leninist line" in MPLA activities.

The Nito Alves/Ze Van Dunem group thought this would enable them, once conditions were right, to stage a silent takeover of power, liquidating or discrediting all those who did not share their ambitions or agree with their methods of action.

They used an easy demagogy and speculated on difficulties inherent to creating a new independent state and enhanced by the problems caused by a violent war of aggression that destroyed the country from North to South leaving hundreds of Angolans homeless and destitute.

This manipulation of our people's difficulties was clothed in a pseudo-Marxist language, exploiting to the full the revolutionary Angolan people's receptivity to revolutionary ideas and to socialism.

The most shameless slanders against leaders and militants were also employed – for these leaders and militants constituted the major

obstacle to the group's whole strategy because of the jobs they were carrying out. The slanders were crudely handled, but their systematic repetition eventually influenced certain comrades who began to doubt the honesty and political firmness of these same leaders and militants.

The splitters even asked for the support of some friendly countries for their adventurist plans, and did not hesitate for this purpose to slander militants and leaders of integrity to embassies.

The splitters abused the good faith of our people. By their acts and by the elitist attitudes of the majority of the group, by their pretentious language and leftist phraseology, by the lies they spread, they revealed a deep disdain for the people whom they lightly thought they could deceive.

They always spoke in the name of the masses, but in fact not only did they keep away from the masses, they also disdained them and were incapable of living with them.

The very "demonstration" with which they hoped to legitimise the failed coup was an insult to the sincerity, to the revolutionary spirit of the workers and people of Luanda. The few hundred people who actually went to the appointed place were misled; nobody told them that what was going on was a coup against the leadership of the Movement and against the Comrade President. And it was because the people saw the trap that the "people's demonstration" aborted.

The truth is that all the enthusiasm and capacity for struggle of MPLA militants, reinvigorated by the victories of the Second War of Liberation, were not enough to stop the splitters from opening breaches in our revolutionary process.

Their action was being attentively followed by the imperialists and by internal forces of reaction, who only had to guide and support all the anti-MPLA activity the group was carrying out.

In the armed forces, in the workers' sector, in wards and especially in the civil service, the reactionary splitters, shielded by their pseudo-Marxist ramblings, activated a number of schemes all aimed at liquidating the MPLA leadership and substituting it with their representatives.

What is ridiculous about the whole process, that went so far as to endanger national independence itself, is that it reflects the political evolution of its principal leaders from April 1974.

If initially Ze Van Dunem and Nito Alves backed their analysis with concepts inspired by the Albanian experience of Enver Hoxa, which

a galaxy of young militants from Portuguese groups distributed in Angolan schools, by the first few months of 1975 these analyses were backed by the writings of Mao Tse Tung on the Chinese revolution.

And in the "study circles" which were the clique's instruments for creating its support groups within MPLA, Nito Alves got as far as discoursing on a disconnected "Analysis of classes in Angola" which was nothing more than simplistic transposition of the Mao Tse Tung text about classes in China, on to Angola.

Mechanical Transpositions

This was a time of indecision amongst some of our youth, who suddenly had access to an unending flow of revolutionary literature they greedily consumed and immediately transposed into the Angolan context as a solution to all political problems.

This was the "flowering" time for the Amilcar Cabral Committees and the Henda Committees, as well as of other leftist intellectuals into whose orbit Ze Van Dunem and Nito Alves gravitated.

But as the legal action of MPLA began to be felt with greater intensity, the influence of these groups waned in favour of another more dynamic group more closely linked to the Angolan process through the jobs its members held in different sectors of national life and in particular in the fields of Education, the Economy and Administration.

This is the time when Sita Vales strangely appeared on the scene, and underwritten by Nito Alves took on extremely important tasks in the Department of Organisation of the Masses of MPLA, tasks that she rapidly tried to extend to other departments.

The unexpected appearance of Sita Vales in mid-1975 passed unnoticed. One was intensely engaged in the struggle against the puppets and the reactionary Portuguese. Some progressive Portuguese appeared and gave a militant contribution alongside MPLA, without there being any anxiety about analysing this participation in relation to the statutes.

Thus Sita Vales came to control a whole series of people, many of whom said they were linked to the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) – which the PCP for its part came to deny.

This collection became a support group for Nito Alves and Ze Van

Dunem's plans – whose actions now were no longer inspired by readings of Mao Tse Tung but by superficial readings of certain texts by Lenin and other Marxist authors, who were not always understood or analysed in their true context, but were frequently quoted to justify this or that position by the splitter group which by now was increasingly active.

This was all going on before a certain passivity from the leadership organisations, snowed under by the complexity of a situation where solutions had to be found to the grave military problems of the day which for some months overshadowed MPLA organisational problems and the need for ideological clarification.

The splitters were already confusing the masses through spreading of wordy concepts lacking any meaning for the Angolan revolution. The prudence shown by the leadership in publishing analyses only based on serious study of Angola's social realities, was used to qualify the leadership as "rightist". The care taken to record the reality of 14 years of armed struggle fundamentally carried out by guerillas of peasant origin, in order to avoid the error of confusing this phase of the struggle with that of the rise of the consciousness of the Angolan working class, then hardly involved in the process was taken as a demonstration of "social democracy" or "Maoism". These absurd ideas went so far as labelling the majority of MPLA and Government leaders "anti soviet" or "anti communist".

Such ridiculous allegations however did affect some militants, some honest, others already affected to splittism. They also weakened the resistance of the Movement's apparatus to infiltrations of all kinds and also caused lack of confidence in some diplomats from friendly countries, frequently besieged by the group.

Some of these groups were by now no longer claiming to be MPLA, and there was even a tendency to blot the strongly mobilising presence of MPLA out from the scene altogether.

Worse, the imperialist espionage agencies, and particularly the French and some of their European allies, did not waste time but strode forward to create bridgeheads here, some of which are now neutralised.

The Splitters' Plan

The plan that was carried out on May 27th had been in preparation for

over three years and can be said to have been inspired by the thoughts, the common life and the ambitions of a relatively small group of young political prisoners of the seventies in what was called in colonial times the "Camp of Sao Nicolau". This group, that did not mix with the majority of the political prisoners from the most exploited classes, made up an elitist nucleus, even in Sao Nicolau, that did not manage to overcome its petty bourgeois prejudices.

Tactically the plan had three distinct phases: infiltration throughout the apparatus of the Movement and the state; Sabotage and discrediting of existing structures; seizure of power.

Strategically the objectives were confused. The leftist terminology supporting the whole plan and covering a basic and badly hidden racism, allowed belief in the possible creating of a "party" that might become the instrument for the building of a strange "scientific socialism", of bookish conception, but without any really "socialist" content, much less "scientific".

The plan thus appeared as an element of division amongst our people, making the revolutionary process more difficult and the attaining of a firm national consciousness as well.

(The Political Bureau statement then describes in detail the infiltration of arms of the administration and the military, schools, women's organisations, the trade union movement, etc. by the splitters, their systematic resort to sabotage, and their seizing on difficulties and shortcomings arising from objective conditions to put the blame on the MPLA leadership. There appeared to be two MPLAs, one led by Ze Van Dunem and Nita Alves. The Central Committee eventually decided on an inquiry into splitter activity and suspended two members of the Central Committee. The Political Bureau statement says: "In its struggle against splittism, the Movement's leadership constantly tried to recuperate the splittists; in order to achieve this, administrative measures were shunned, and the method of discussing problems within MPLA organisations was employed." But "this method of discussion, criticism and self-criticism in the Movement's organisations was taken by the splitters as a sign of gentleness and even weakness in the leadership." The splitters drew up a new coup strategy and, fearful of the effects of the Central Committee inquiry, even prepared for a military coup.)

The entire arsenal consisted in classifying the Movement's leadership

as "social democratic", or "rightist" or "Maoist" or "antisoviet", with incoherent reasons completely divorced from the truth, from the history of MPLA, and revealing complete incomprehension of the realities of the Angolan revolution.

And in considering the Government as incapable and reactionary, except for the "consequent Minister of Internal Trade", described as a "man of the left" – because the responsibility for shortages of consumer goods was attributed to the Government.

This permanent intoxication was accompanied by criminal acts of sabotage from inside all organisations, in order to convince the people of the Government's incapacity.

At the level of the Movement, as well as the senseless terminology they were trying to imbue into militants, as well as infiltration of their agents into organisations they were seeking to destroy or at least weaken, the splitters tried to establish comparisons between MPLA and certain communist parties with decades of experience, in order to try to prove deviations and wrong concepts of the leadership: while the splitters ignored – consciously or not – that MPLA is not a communist party, and it is not even a party, and the the universal laws which rule our liberation struggle do not sweep aside the specifics of our struggle, even after independence.

The splitter intellectuals, easily hauled in behind the political problems facing Portugal both before and after the fall of fascism, and incapable of throwing off the mentality inherited from colonial times, were unconscious bearers of a certain "ideological paternalism" which often took the form of intellectual neocolonialism. They were incapable of completely identifying with the independent Angolan people, and with militants formed within MPLA, and actively disdained the maturity and experience of the militants who took part in, or led 20 years of struggle. These splitter intellectuals became one more agency of ideological confusion which came to constitute declared sabotage to the MPLA's socialist option and to the Central Committee's initiatives which aimed at putting this option into practice with the holding of the MPLA Congress and the decision to create a Marxist-Leninist Party.

At Government level, and backed by a conservative bureaucracy, the splitters constantly halted the carrying out of government decisions. At every step the Statutes of the Overseas Civil Service were used and abused, in order to justify the need to fill in such and such a formality

before carrying out the revolutionary decisions that had been made in the interests of the people.

At the level of food distribution absolute sabotage was organised. The sacrifice made by the nation to import consumer goods was not translated into easier acquisition by the people. There were bottlenecks at various levels, from the Ward Committees (CPBs) to the Ministry of Internal Trade itself, all with the declared objective of provoking discontent and people's revolt against the MPLA and the government. When attempts were made to pin down responsibilities, a clever buck-passing system shoved the problem over to a different sector in some way or another linked to the process so that the true causes of the bottleneck were always hidden.

So the criminal basis of splitter tactics is starkly revealed. In all the sonorous but hollow prattling they used to present themselves as marxists, there is an enormous vacuum. And it always appears in all their positions. In their speeches, in their writings, in their interventions in meetings, NOT THE SLIGHTEST INDICATION OF THEIR ECONOMIC CONCEPTS EVER APPEARS, nor any reference whatsoever to the acute problems of the Angolan economy. Neither Nito Alves nor any other splitter leader ever called on the people to intensify production. None of them ever referred to the worrying expenditure of foreign exchange to obtain food, rather than capital goods which the country so badly needs (tractors, machines, transport vehicles, etc.). None of them ever analysed the shortages of cadres and ways of overcoming them. This would have been against their demagogic strategy. What was needed was to mislead with lightly made and wordy promises of a bookish socialism, not demanding of sacrifices and easily built with quotations from the great classics.

Even sport was used by the splitters in the preparation of the coup. The efforts by FAPLA commands to normalise transports, food distribution, weapons supplies and uniforms, often met with obstacles at regional or sectorial level which would have been easily overcome had there been a collective effort made by the cadres. The same thing happened with the fighters' pay. Incomprehensibly, some zones complained of inconceivable delays and everything was blamed on the Staff Headquarters and the Ministry of Defence. On the day of the coup itself, splitter officers were found to be storing away (and often using for their own purposes) the sums meant for the fighters, claiming they

hadn't yet received the money. In the days following the coup, millions of kwanzas were found in briefcases, safes and banks in the name of the splitters. These millions of kwanzas were destined for the soldiers and inexplicably remained in the officers' hands for months, thanks to the fact that there were not enough cadres to set up a national inspection service.

This was the splitters' scheme in answer to the Central Committee's decision to hold an enquiry into Nito Alves and Ze Van Dunem...

The Coup Idea Takes Shape

In January of this year, Nito Alves called a meeting in the farm belonging to his coreligionary Kindanda, at which Bakalef, Monstro, Ze Van Dunem, Juka Valentim, Khala, Betinka, Luis Kitumba, Pedro Fortunato and others were present, for an analysis of the pamphlet later to be entitled "13 theses in my defence".

In this note, aside from an avalanche of quotations filling two thirds of the contents, the authors (Nito and his thinkers) distilled all the animosity the group directed towards the Central Committee and more particularly against all the comrades who had at one or another time expressed their criticisms and their apprehensions about the splitter activites which, in the name of Nito Alves, were being carried out within the movement. Everything was once again set out in the usual pseudo-Marxist terminology, and there was a claim that "antisovietism" existed within MPLA – "the common denominator of the maoists and social democrats installed within the Movement". Anyone who knows MPLA and its leadership recognises their respect and friendship towards the peoples and parties of friendly socialist countries, especially the Soviet people and party. The splitters hoped with this tactic not only to put a distance between the MPLA leadership and friendly communist parties, but also to attract these parties' support by appearing to constitute the firmest defenders of this friendship.

One aspect is worthy of particular attention. The pamphlet document contained the seeds of the coup idea in its conclusions, in the decision to "constitute a Revolutionary Committee for Politico-Military Leadership" to replace the Political Bureau at once, and take measures to eliminate all those considered as "deviationists".

(When in May, 1977, the first coup plan failed because of a change

in the venue of a Central Committee meeting, the splitter activity of the two under inquiry was exposed. On May 21 "the comrade President (Agostinho Neto) announced to militants across the country the Central Committe decision to expel the two splitters and launch 'a real and serious fight against the splitters'. However he made explicit the decision to try recuperating for MPLA the 'lost sheep'. Even then MPLA's philosophy of giving militants who strayed the chance to redeem themselves was respected". But the coup-makers did not abandon their intentions and their plans now extended to include the assassination of members of the MPLA leadership including President Neto himself if he refused to accept their demands, resign his office and dismiss the Government and the Political Bureau. A second coup attempt miscarried, but on May 27th the final attempt was launched. The main prison was attacked and prisoners were released, including members of UNITA and FNLA. The national radio station was occupied. A number of top MPLA officials, Government ministers and army officers were assassinated. But the loyal leadership of FAPLA and DISA quickly rallied their forces and, with the support of the masses in town and country, soon crushed the revolt. The Political Bureau report ends with a section headed: "New Tasks of the Revolution".)

The Comrade President explained the process of events to the whole nation, brutally wounded by such vile treason. The entire Angolan people demanded the abominable crimes committed by this band of adventurers, traitors and ambition-filled men, be punished with all severity and without pardon. The irreparable loss of such high and valiant leaders to the young Nation, in which revolutionary brave and simple cadres are few, the dangerous situation we went through at a time when the enemy was concentrating troops on our frontiers ready to go ahead with provocations leading to destabilisation of our country and at the same time of the Frontline States and Liberation Movements of Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa, the preparations leading up to the execution of the coup in which the division of militants and the division of the people were targets, via a web of criminal slanders; the strange links with many foreigners where imperialist manipulation did not succeed, despite everything, in passing unobserved; all these factors obliged declaration of a "state of emergency" which allowed the immediate cutting short of all would-be attempts at a new coup which were being planned in order to take advantage of the disturbed state of affairs

brought on by the coup.

A SPECIAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL was set up to try those implicated in the treasonable coup on May 27th, and meet the national wish to punish without pardon all those who were revealed as responsible in the coup's organisation and execution. The entire Angolan prople and many friendly countries joined in the deep mourning of families and comrades of those who gloriously fell during the coup.

This sorrowful event nonetheless constituted another extraordinary victory by MPLA over its enemies. Put to the test once more, in such a violent and unexpected way, MPLA militants, guided by the unwavering firmness of Comrade President Agostinho Neto, knew how to overcome the difficulties emerging more steeled than ever to carry out the pressing tasks of fighting the splitters, of National Reconstruction, of Preparing the Congress and of marching ever on to Socialism.

Time will help for a better analysis of the enormity of this anti-MPLA action.

Its failure saved Angola and the whole nation from dramatic consequences that would have drawn the country to immeasurable catastrophe. If the coup plan alone contained assassinations, what would have happened if the coupmakers could have carried on for even a few more hours? What consequences would have come from even the limited success of the coup plan? What would have happened to the structures slowly but surely being set up at Government level? What would have happened to our still fragile economy that little by little we are rebuilding? The projects of Housing, Health and Education would have been completely razed and the truth is the coup plan did not go beyond the proclamation on the National Radio. Nothing was planned for the benefit of the people and for National Reconstruction. Nito Alves, Ze Van Dunem and their followers were only capable of planning the destruction of what was being built up.

What would the consequences have been for national independence and the territorial integrity of our country? It did not escape anybody that during the days planned for the coup, our Northern and Southern frontiers were the object of grave provocations, violations and even an increase in the concentration of Zairois and South African troops. How did these countries know what was going to happen?

In London, a strange representative of Nito Alves announced he was off to Paris to meet members of UNITA...

Western Chanceries were optimistic about the advantages the coup's success would bring capitalist interests.

What finally was the true nature of a coup d'etat anxiously awaited and cleverly manipulated by international imperialism? Who would have become the People's Republic of Angola's new allies? The reply to these questions is in the mouth of all MPLA militants and of all patriots: the coup of May 27th was a reactionary coup aimed at eliminating the Angolan Revolution and MPLA.

Splitters' Class Background

One shocking aspect of the whole process cannot escape militants. Who were the actors? It wasn't the working people... It wasn't the workers. It wasn't the peasants. In their majority they were young people from different layers of the Angolan petty bourgeoisie, and elements from the most privileged of our youth who had a common life together in clandestinity when they were students, in the "Sao Nicolau Camp" as political prisoners, or at the CIR Certeza where some went after the First War of Liberation, in search of the romantic side of guerilla life which had actually already come to an end.

All these people used an ultra-Marxist vocabulary yet their private lives and militant practices left much to be desired.

They were all masters of peroration on the question of the class struggle, on the need to eliminate the petty bourgeoisie, but... none of them had any difficulties with salaries, housing or food supplies and all of them were members of the petty bourgeoisie which they said they hated so much. Moreover, it became clear that at the level of the Ward Committe, it was these incorrigible splitters who blocked distribution of goods in some cooperatives to members, and then sent off there to buy for their families.

The peasants were not tainted by splittism, with the exception of one or other individual who adhered to splittism through tribalism or regionalism.

In the working class sector, aside from one or two individuals and a few Union Committees, the workers did not allow themselves to be dragged into the adventure or to be misled by the so-called "militants of consequence".

On the other hand, splittism sought much of the little support it had

for the coup d'etat from within the Luanda lumpen, and it was moreover in the lumpen that it based part of the violent action that took place. Many of these lumpen were freed by the splitters from the jails where they were serving common law prison terms.

The splitters developed tribalism, regionalism and racism in order to achieve their objectives.

Today, now that splittism has been defeated, it is important that the struggle against these defects of society be defeated on militant grounds and within a correct understanding of the problem in terms of class struggle.

Militants from the Action Groups should stay attentive to this problem and denounce the practice of these attitudes at all times, particularly by those who see in splittism's defeat the moment to turn opportunist again and assault positions of privilege.

On the other hand, reactionary forces are hoping to take advantage of the current situation to raise their heads. This will demand immediate and efficient combat by militants to neutralise them.

Ultra-Leftism Aids Reaction

Angola, like other African countries, has had its painful experience with the so-called leftwing from the former colonial power. They came to Angola, or were already here in frank opposition to the settlers, but then after independence, they went on refusing to believe in Angolans' capacity to govern themselves, and they practised paternalism... of "the left", setting themselves up as the ideological mentors of our young people to whom they transmitted the schemes of the struggle in Portugal, forgetting that here everything is different and principally the people, which no longer has to consider itself as Portuguese. Aside from all this activity, supposedly of the left, their action in the process assumed a form and content that were profoundly reactionary.

Imperialism was present throughout the whole process. With a cautious hand, it knew the right moment to activate those who easily allowed themselves to fall into imperialism's orbit, in order to create a situation favourable to it alone. The next few months will bring to the surface all the concrete instances of imperialist intervention in the web, where a pseudo-leftism served as a curtain surrounding imperialist participation.

MPLA's militants knew how to stop the violent coup that was directed at them, and are already preparing to staunch the wounds and intensify actions to strengthen our revolutionary process.

In these grave hours, it was decisive to be able to continue to count upon the internationalist friendship of the socialist countries, such as the USSR for example, and in particular the Cuban comrades, whose presence prevented the imperialist circle from taking advantage of the situation that had been created, and brought us, by the friendly hand of a top leader, a gesture of solidarity.

With splittism wounded to death, it is up to MPLA militants to give it the final blow which will allow progressing rapidly on to the priority tasks of organisation of the Movement and organisation of the State.

Today, more than ever, the Action Groups and activists have the enormous responsibility of developing a dynamic process that will rapidly rebuild MPLA structures.

With the splitters' verbosity silenced, it is necessary seriously to deepen our study of the foundations of Marxism-Leninism which will guide all our actions, in a constant increase of the political and ideological level of militants.

While we undertake a campaign of flushing out splitters and organising new action groups at places of work, we shall plan study, which will enable us to consciously take part in preparing the Congress and creating solid bases for the creation of a Marxist-Leninist party from now on.

Splittism should not make us forget that the principle enemy continues to be world imperialism, which, headed by North-American imperialism has shown itself to be very aggressive in relation to Angola and to Southern Africa. At this time particularly, the aggressiveness of the French monopoly interests, and of all the puppets who are still practising infiltration from our frontiers with the intention of provoking instability and unease, is to be noted.

MPLA militants are called to defend with even greater vigour, the only road of development of interest to the masses. This road, as the Central Committee Third Plenary Session declared, is scientific socialism based on the doctrine of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

And so that we can guarantee the march of our people towards socialism, can move forward without deviations, we must, each of us at his post, redouble efforts to carry out the principal tasks of National

Reconstruction.

A long road has already been travelled towards returning many of the riches of our country to the people. Much remains to be done in this field. We cannot jump stages, only obeying some of our legitimate aspirations without basing them on objective conditions.

The increase of agricultural and industrial production, organisation of all sectors of production from management through planning and rational increase of productivity, to organisation of education and health, the struggle against illiteracy are premises assuring the building of socialism in Angola.

And by fulfilling all these tasks as militants and workers, we shall be fulfilling the guidance of Comrade President to "care for the material life of the people". And so we shall consolidate the unity of the Movement and the unity of the people, which, as the Central Committee Third Plenary Session reaffirmed, includes the working class, the peasants, the patriotic petty bourgoisie and the revolutionary intellectuals.

The Comrade President has often emphasised the need to fight the tendency to fall into an erroneous concept of the class struggle, leading to the isolation of the working class from its allies – the peasants, the patriotic petty bourgeoisie and the revolutionary intellectuals.

MPLA will as always continue to struggle so the working class, "legitimate respository of the doctrine of scientific socialism", takes on its leading role, but without isolating itself from the other forces in the National Revolution.

We should consolidate the internationalist spirit of our people, developing friendship with the socialist countries, and with progressive parties from the whole world. We should intensify support to the liberation movements, especially of Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa, Timor and Western Sahara.

With the coup attempt of May 27th, our structures received some blows deserving of immediate attention. A broad movement of criticism and self-criticism at the scale of the entire Movement will enable detection and correction of some of the weaknesses which helped the splitter manoeuvres.

At the level of the Wards in the big cities, the Movement's Committees must help residents, from now on, and wherever possible through the Ward Committees, to resolve some of their fundamental problems

particularly in supplies, health and hygiene, water and electricity supply, schooling and even housing (which though more difficult to solve should still be tackled at Ward level.) In this way we shall move forward to strengthen People's Power, entirely in the service of the masses and not at the service of a few opportunists.

The struggle against the last redoubts of the coupmakers, servile lackeys of all the imperialists, will be strengthened further by the contribution of each militant to the solution of present problems of supplies, production and organisation and discipline at work. Each worker should understand he must give of his best so that increases in production will come to benefit the whole people, whose sacrifices during the two Wars of Liberation justify their hopes in gathering the fruits of independence.

We shall apply Revolutionary Democratic Dictatorship, to finish with saboteurs, parasites and speculators once and for all.

We shall organise our vigilance better and nip in the bud any new attempts to revive splittism in MPLA and divisionism amongst the people. Vigilance at work, vigilance at home. The militant participation in denouncing the splitters has been exemplary. We need to go further. At work, we must foresee any acts of sabotage. At home, we must guarantee the security of residents, for which the People's Vigilance Brigades, in cooperation with the CPPA, should increase their capacity for control and fighting against crime.

We shall mobilise all patriots for production. Whoever doesn't work in the cities should make their contribution to agricultural production. We shall give serious support to the harvesting of coffee and sugar cane!

Government action should be freed from the shackles of bureaucracy. The Government must become effectively a Revolutionary Government, knowing when necessary how to overcome retrograde colonial-era laws and bureaucrats who clog the people's Revolution.

Mass organisations should rapidly be restructured and their structures strengthened to carry out the watchwords of MPLA.

Let us fight all opportunists and especially those petty bourgeois who think that because the splitters were defeated the time is ripe to throw themselves into the search for privileged positions.

Let us accelerate the solutions to the major problems of the workers.

Strengthened by the new victories achieved, inspired by the militant example set by our fallen comrades, certain of the justice of our social-

ist option, let us prepare ourselves for more hard and decisive struggles for organisation of MPLA and the State, for National Reconstruction, for the Congress and for creation of the Party.

Long live the Unity of the Nation!
Death to the splitters!
Forward to the Congress!
The Struggle Continues!
Victory is Certain!

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Pledge of support from Independent Africa

Speech delivered by Comrade Agostinho Neto, President of the MPLA and of the People's Republic of Angola, at the opening session of the 29th meeting of the OAU Co-ordinating Commission for the Liberation of Africa, Luanda, 14 June 1977

Mr Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity,
Mr Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee,
Leaders of Liberation Movements and Comrades in the Struggle,
Delegates:

For the first time a meeting of the Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa is about to begin in Angola.

All those present can imagine our happiness and joy, the joy of the Angolan people, whose liberation struggle now opens new prospects of action for the whole of the African continent.

And this victory, as we have affirmed on various occasions, was not the victory of the Angolan people alone, but the fight of the peoples already independent who were with us at every moment of the struggle.

It is the victory of the people who are advancing towards progress.

It is also the victory of the peoples of Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe and, outside our continent, of the people of East Timor, with whom we fought together against the common enemy, Portuguese colonialism.

It is also the victory of the peoples who are not yet free from colonialism, such as the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. The dynamism of all has brought this new phase of dignity and freedom which we desire for every African.

The meeting in Luanda of the Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa is of fundamental significance. More than ever, we can today understand the importance of the political and economic bases at out disposal. Now more than ever, we can today see the real possibilities of our continent, so long as we ourselves control the means and natural resources that are within our reach.

Here in Angola, we view the evolution of the revolutionary process from a certain standpoint. That is that Angola is first and foremost a part of Africa. We are Africans. But when we broaden that analytical view, we also arrive at the conclusion that Africans are a part of humanity.

Certainly, Africans differ from Europeans, certainly they differ from Asians and Americans, in their physical appearance, their culture and their way of seeing the universe. But we Africans cannot fail to understand the development of man, through the strengths and weaknesses demonstrated.

Above all, we cannot fail to understand the world of today.

The great capitals of Europe were built on the blood, sweat and patient labour of millions of exploited beings of our continent, among others. And among those others are the native peoples of America and Asia.

As we understand it, therefore, we are part of a universal process of development whose pattern, since the era of colonial exploitation, has been that of drawing the maximum benefits from situations of domination and exploitation of some by others.

And I shall not be telling you anything new in saying that colonial oppression provided benefits for those who had the greatest technical means of domination.

Here in Angola, we were enslaved. As in many other African

countries. And the slaves participated in the building of many States in distant continents, especially in America.

There was a period when we could distinguish at least two opposing classes – the masters and the slaves. There was no social or economic consideration for the latter. Slaves were purely and simply instruments of labour.

But who were the masters?

Who were those who dominated?

If we take the time to analyse this, we see that it was not every Frenchman, every Englishman, every Dutchman or Italian. It was those who owned the means of production in their countries. They owned the factories, they controlled agricultural production. They owned the ships and vehicles, in short the instruments of production. And today they also own the finance houses, banks and technology. They were the capitalists. They were the bosses.

We see that when at a certain point those individuals could not multiply the wealth in their respective countries, they began to export their capital and their technology, so as to dominate and exploit other peoples in one way or another. This has been the essence of the contradiction with which our world is grappling today.

The principal element is not and never has been the skin colour or the social background of individuals. The principal element is the opposition between exploiters and dominators and the exploited and dominated. The contradiction is between those who own the means and those who produce material goods.

We therefore rejoice in Angola on reaching the level of awareness, when the worker, the peasant, the official who were yesterday subject to exploitation can now realise their importance in the phase of independence, their importance in the struggle for independence and their fundamental role in building a just social system in which no men will be exploited by others.

And it is is in the name of those working people – Angolan workers and peasants – that I have the honour to welcome you, delegates, friends and comrades in the struggle, hoping that you will feel at home in Angola.

It is possible that not all the necessary comforts yet exist in our capital, but we offer the most that we can with all our hearts.

I hope also that the revolutionary warmth and affection of the

Angolan people will be incentives for concretising the hard work done over the past years for the complete liberation of our continent.

Decisive Moment in History

We are at a historically decisive moment for the liberation of the southern part of Africa.

Our continent has not yet completely freed itself from colonialism. In some areas there is still the economic and social domination by European or American powers which need to export their capital and technology. That domination is real, and we can see it clearly in the fact that there are some countries which hold meetings in European capitals, but which are not able to make European governmental groups meet in African capitals as well. This shows the classic subordination of peoples, through their leaders, to certain groups in developed countries, on a political or an economic basis, but above all on the basis of material exploitation.

We need to be quite clear about what is happening in Zimbabwe. What is the character of the struggle in Zimbabwe? What goals does it try to achieve? Obviously, only the people of Zimbabwe can provide the proper answers to these questions.

There are, however, facts that we cannot escape from. In Zimbabwe there is exploitation, there is domination and abuse by a given social group against the people of Zimbabwe. And the people cannot put up with this slavery any longer. Hence the violent confrontation that has been sparked off, as was the case in Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Angola and Cape Verde in recent years.

Who exploits? Who dominates?

They are British.

The chief of the oppression in Zimbabwe is a Briton, not an African. Those who control the economy are Britons or their friends.

Those who dominate the social scene (as happened here in Angola with the Portuguese) are British.

Those who direct the institutions of defence and repression – the army, the police, the security – are British.

We therefore have no hesitation in saying that those who hold political power in Zimabawe at this moment are representatives of the ruling class in Great Britain, that is, British capitalists, obviously allied

with the South African racists, the French and German reactionaries and the whole imperialist mafia.

In Zimbabwe there is a colonial problem. When we wage war against the British resident in Rhodesia, we must not forget those who are in Europe. To solve the problem, it is necessary that the British colonialists, whether disguised as Rhodesians or not, should give up power. Some should possibly remain there, but only with the consent of the people of Zimbabwe. The colonialist is a serpent and his head must be cut off. That is the principal problem now.

We in Angola view with reservations certain postures indicating a course of demanding elections for a black majority, even if this is done only as a tactic in the struggle. This tactic will deceive the people and will not lead to any results.

What is needed is for the British and their resident intermediaries in Rhodesia to give up power and for power to go to the Africans.

And the former should not fear this, because it is only on the basis of freedom that peoples unite. It is only in freedom that they find the openness required for friendly relations. Historical ties, even where they are unjustly maintained for centuries, never fail to leave their mark of objective and traditional reasons for cooperation.

And as developed, underdeveloped and developing peoples, we all have an interest in acting together.

From the material standpoint, there is but one world, albeit contradictory. From the social standpoint, there is but one world, albeit contradictory. We understand the course of historical development.

Role of South Africa

Namibia is occupied by the South African army, and this has also allowed economic occupation by South Africa.

The people of Namibia need to be free from the South African racists in order to develop in enjoyment of full rights and freedom.

And in South Africa?

There one of the most serious class confrontations ever waged on the African continent is taking place, and there is no doubt that it is the working class that will take power in South Africa. This is what we must support for the liberation of the millions in the southern tip of the continent. The problem is not and never was purely racial. Race is

merely used for the domination of one class by another. We Angolans refuse to pose the problem of liberation as a racial question.

In a few days, on 17 June, and during this Conference, we shall celebrate the victory of Soweto, which is a call. It is an affirmation. It is a victory.

We Angolans support also our companions in the struggle in the Canary Islands, and we hope that the outcome in Djibouti will be effectively to the advantage of the people.

In Angola we have experienced the problems of liberation very intensely, because we freed ourselves from colonialism only very recently.

And we hope that the dynamic fighters for freedom will lose no opportunity to eliminate the colonialists.

There are manoeuvres being made to sabotage that independence. It has always been so.

The peoples must remain vigilant. They must demand complete independence and the freedom to choose the socio-political system which each considers most appropriate for its situation.

The colonialists are very busy setting up commissions, working groups and other bodies to try to reconcile some of the interests of the future leaders of the dominated countries with those of the multi-national monopoly groups. Above all, they think that they can establish neo-colonialism in every African country.

Happily, Angola has not fallen into their scheme, nor could it.

And I refer to this aspect of the question only to say that there is no need to fear the colonialists or their lackeys.

Firmness pays.

It is necessary, before all else, to defend the interests of the people; first and foremost, the interests of the classes which were most exploited during the period of domination.

There is no cause for fear. The people will support just measures, as they are the ones who suffered the toils of colonialism.

I do not want in any way to preempt the guidance from the Liberation Committee, which helped us so generously during our national liberation struggle. I do, however, want in the name of the Angolan people to express the view that armed struggle should not be scanted in any area still occupied by the enemy.

Only through armed struggle is it possible to defeat the oppressive forces in the world. It is not through negotiations, through conferences

or councils, that the peoples will decide their own future. Because there is a conflict of interests, a class struggle created now by imperialism and by the desire of one social group on its own to dominate all the others.

Armed struggle was the decisive factor for the talks in Switzerland, and in bringing the problems of Zimbabwe and Namibia to the forefront. Without armed struggle, there is no energy in the national liberation struggle. Armed struggle must therefore be intensified.

And in our view, it is essential to increase support for the liberation struggle of the people of South Africa immediately. Because the people of that brother country are among those who have most deeply suffered the humiliation caused by social, political and class segregation. It is they who have most felt in their flesh the fascist fury.

Armed struggle obviously provokes reactions from the enemy, violent and unjust reactions, but they are painful facts.

Mozambique and, to a lesser degree, Botswana and Zambia, have been attacked. They suffered aggression by the racists who are still resisting in order to maintain their supremacy in each country of southern Africa.

Angola will not speak at this Conference in the name of the Front Line. It will, however, speak as a Front Line State.

It affirms that our support for the countries of Southern Africa is not merely in phrases, but in concrete acts which will show our solidarity with the peoples of the other countries.

We must emerge from this meeting with decisions.

Which ones?

The comrades who are still fighting for independence and freedom need arms, training camps and food. They need uniforms, boots, caps and knives. They need blankets, knapsacks and tents.

And if we as independent Africans understand this problem of liberation philosophically, what can we do from the practical point of view?

We are going to help! Angola at least is politically prepared to give material assistance, even at the cost of sacrifices for its people.

Every African country has internal forces capable of maintaining revolutionary changes. However, this change must be speeded up, because there are human beings enslaved, and because it is our duty to work for the magnificent freedom that we already enjoy.

I hope that the conclusion reached at this meeting will genuinely contribute to the advance of the liberation struggle in Africa, that is:

in weapons, in land and air transport, in foodstuffs, programmed in the budgets and plans of every African country.

In this way, we shall be worthy of ourselves.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES
VICTORY IS CERTAIN!

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CUBA & ANGOLA an act of solidarity

By Alexander Sibeko

> "Socialism, internationalism and Marxism-Leninism tell us that we must struggle shoulder to shoulder. That is why I believe that unity and brotherhood, solidarity and collaboration between the peoples of Angola and Cuba are an example to the world."
>
> Fidel Castro (Luanda, March 23, 1977)

During the Caribbean crisis of 1962, when Yankee imperialism threatened not only to throttle the young Cuban Revolution, but also to plunge the world into a nuclear holocaust, the cry 'Cuba si, Yanqui no!' resounded in all lands.

Solidarity demonstrations took place in South Africa. It can be recalled how an emergency picket outside the US consulate in Durban was broken up with more than the usual vigour by the police. Some of us youngsters were a shade surprised that the racist thugs had displayed less tolerance and even greater anger than usual. The late M.P. Naicker, who was banned but nevertheless managed to oversee the action from

his *New Age* office, laughed and told us that we were learning the important lesson of just how powerful and influential US imperialism was.

It is also interesting to recall how engrossed we all were with Che Guevara's handbook on 'Guerrilla Warfare' which had just become available. The book made an important impact on the minds of the militants who were the nucleus of our recently formed military vanguard, Umkhonto We Sizwe. The book continues to teach and inspire; which is a fact that is most interesting to record at a time when we commemorate the tenth anniversary of Che's death – brutally murdered by C.I.A. hirelings in Bolivia on October 9, 1967.

The young people who have left home in the wake of the Soweto uprising are eager to lay hands on the writings of Che, Fidel and the Cuban Revolution, as well as the rich storehouse of Marxism-Leninism; just as readily as they give voice to our song of the early nineteen-sixties – 'Take the Country the Castro Way!'

From January 1, 1959 when Fidel's rebel army liberated Cuba from Batista's fascist yoke, and the momentous occasion on April 16, 1961 – the very eve of the US sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion – when the Cuban Revolution, equipped with the ideology of the working class, irrevocably opted for socialism, it can be truly said that South African patriots have followed the course of the Cuban Revolution with unswerving attention and support.

Much water has flowed under the bridge in that time, with the revolutionary current growing steadily stronger; despite the violent counter-offensive and reserves of strength at the disposal of reaction. We have seen a socialist revolution consolidated and make remarkable gains on a Caribbean island a mere 90 miles from the citadel of imperialism – the USA. We have witnessed heroic people's victories in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia; in Algeria, Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. As a dramatic example of the shift in the balance of forces in favour of national liberation and socialism in Southern Africa we have seen the Cuban Revolution come to the aid of the young People's Republic of Angola, in much the same way as the Soviet Union rallied to support Republican Spain, Vietnam and Cuba itself.

Examples of solidarity and internationalism become an inspiring example for revolutionaries of all times and places. It is the common ideology, the fierce struggle against a common enemy, that creates an

organic link and continuity between all revolutions and revolutionary upheavals. Just as all reactionaries form part of an unholy alliance, so true revolutionaries form eternal bonds that bind them together in a spirit of internationalism. After the triumph of the Great October Revolution a famous Russian poster proclaimed: "The dead of the Paris Commune have risen again under the red flag of the Soviets!" A Spanish comrade writing on the example of Republican Spain and the bravery of the International Brigades has observed:

> "It was highly symbolic that Fidel Castro and the group of *Granma* heroes led by him were initiated into the art of war by a Spanish war veteran, Alberto Bayo. The events of Spain moulded the political consciousness of the young Ernesto Che Guevara. In the Bay of Pigs, slogans of the Battle of Madrid – "They shall not pass" and "It is better to die on your feet than live on your knees" – expressed revolutionary Cuba's confidence in victory." (*World Marxist Review* July 1976 – 'For Your Freedom and Ours' by Lina Argenti).

Source of Inspiration

Cuba, the first socialist country in the Western Hemisphere, shines in the sky like a bright star pointing the way ahead. In the words of the Soviet leader Leonard Brezhnev it is 'a source of inspiration for many states that have liberated themselves from the chains of imperialism.'

Cuba, like Vietnam, is living proof that it is possible to achieve victory against even the most powerful and ruthless enemy in the world when a people are united and determined to struggle behind a correct leadership in alliance with the world progressive forces. Fidel has said that 'without the existence of the Soviet Union a socialist revolution would have been impossible in Cuba', and the lesson is not lost on genuine fighters for liberation. Neither, it must be said, is that lesson lost on imperialism which strives its utmost to divide the national liberation movements from the socialist camp. Cuba's own keen sense of proletarian internationalism, its militant anti-imperialist awareness, has developed out of its experience in struggle. The consciousness of its people has been sharpened on the hard rock of imperialism which has sought to prevent them from controlling their own destiny and winning their genuine independence. Cuba has come to represent an outstanding example of internationalism, a reliable and trusty ally of the socialist countries and those struggling to be free and independent.

The manner in which Cuba and the Soviet Union, which provided unstinting technical aid and support, came to the aid of Angola infuriated the imperialists and racists beyond description; so used are they to regarding African peoples and states as mere pawns on a chessboard. What could be more natural however, than that Cuba and the Soviet Union, as ever loyal to the traditions and principles of internationalism, should hasten to Angola's aid at the moment when imperialism was threatening to trample her sovereignty into the dust and snatch from her people the fruits of their hard-won struggle?

For years the racists of South Africa, and their imperialist patrons, have been sounding blood-curdling alarms about "the coming of the Reds". For years they have been polluting our blue skies with their crude anti-communist and anti-Soviet poison. Anti-communism, the tool of Hitler, has long been a major weapon in their arsenal. It is used by imperialists in an attempt to conceal the true nature of their vicious system of exploitation; it is used to protect Western strategic interests and capital investments; it is used to deceive the world public and vilify those who most implacably challenge their power. With great arrogance they attempt to challenge Cuba's right to give aid to sovereign and independent African states or to the liberation movements seeking reliable support. The Cubans have been cast as "Moscow's mercenaries", as some species of "aliens in Africa" by the very forces that never hesitate to despatch hired thugs from one side of the world to the other on a path of murder and destruction from which women, children, the old and sick are not spared. International support exists for Cuba's policy which, like that of the Soviet Union, does not involve any interference in the internal affairs of other states. Cuba, like the Soviet Union, aids peoples who have shaken off colonialism, helps them to defend and strengthen their independence. The imperialists rant about a common "Soviet and Cuban strategy" for interfering in Africa. The answer is "yes", there is a common strategy – it is one for supporting people who face aggression and violence.

The truth is that the Cubans have far more in common with Africa than those who sit in Washington, London, Paris and Bonn – reaping bloody profits from their vast investments – or those who think it is their God-given right to keep Africa free from communism.

A Latin-African Nation

Fidel has recently reminded the world, with a great deal of justifiable pride, that Africa is a continent with which Cuba is united by strong cultural and blood ties. "African blood flows freely through our veins", he has said and added: "We are not only a Latin-American nation, we are a Latin-African nation".

According to statistical calculations and historical research carried out since the triumph of the Revolution, over one million slaves were transported to Cuba between the 17th and 19th Centuries to work in the sugar-cane plantations. It is estimated that 200,000 of those slaves came from Angola. There are numerous accounts of slave rebellions and many slaves played leading roles in the struggle against Spanish colonialism. Many of the cultural traditions of the slaves came to form part of Cuban culture. Cuban dance and music, to mention only two aspects, have firm roots in Africa as well as Spain.

There is a Cuban legend, one among many, that is repeated over and over again in the sugar cane areas of Las Villas province about a group of slaves from Angola. They were particularly rebellious and one night, when they'd had enough of the beatings, they broke out of their compound and danced and sang their way into the hills. A storm came and nothing more was heard of them, because they had flown back to Africa.

What could be more appropriate and just than that the descendants of those slaves have returned to help Angola defend its freedom and independence?

Power of Proletarian Internationalism

But it is more than culture and blood ties that unites Cuba to Africa. After all, before the Revolution, when Havana was known as a den of American gangsterdom and prostitution, Cuba had little contact or interest in Africa. Cuba had to start developing its contacts with Africa, as with the Soviet Union, virtually from scratch. It is interesting to note that Che made the first official journey to Africa and Asia in June of 1959, and that he headed the first official economic mission to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries at the end of 1960. It is the common interest in the struggle against imperialism that has served to

develop and strengthen Cuba's relations with progressive mankind. When Agostinho Neto visited Cuba in July, 1976 he expressed that view by declaring:

> **"We are here to reaffirm our loyalty to the principles of proletarian internationalism, which has made it possible to turn blood ties and a common history into an invincible force bringing freedom, independence and happiness to our people." (*Granma*, 28/7/76)**

This firm relationship shows the unique power implicit in the ideas and principles of Marxism-Leninism. When Fidel paid his historic visit of a profoundly revolutionary and internationalist character to several African countries during March, 1977 he was able to declare to a huge rally in Luanda:

> **"Marx, Engels and Lenin spoke of internationalism; but we, our generation, have had the privilege of seeing and putting internationalism into practice."**

At a meeting in May Day Square, Luanda, on March 27, celebrating the defeat of the South African racists the year before, he stated:

> **"Angolan brothers and sisters, we are united not only by ideology but also by the blood we shed in the common struggle against imperialism and for the victories of the people." (*Granma*, 10/4/77)**

Thus the relationship between the Cuban and Angolan revolutions became sealed in blood. The relations go back many years which is why imperialism can never succeed in deceiving honest people. From the very early days after the overthrow of Batista, support and aid was forthcoming for the liberation movements, and Cuba soon established close ties with the brother movements of FRELIMO, PAIGC, MPLA, SWAPO, ZAPU and our ANC.

The Second War of Liberation

The Portuguese colonialists had been defeated in a liberation war whose burden, despite the sham claims of such as UNITA and FLNA, had been overwhelmingly carried by the MPLA. At the beginning of October, 1975 there was not a single Cuban soldier in Angola. There were foreign troops, however. The South African racists had occupied Cunene, and Mobutu's Zairian troops were 50 kilometers from Luanda. Imperialism was giving massive support in dollars and armaments to the UNITA, FLNA and FLEC traitors and puppets. Fidel has described how the decision to provide Cuban internationalist volunteers and mili-

tary aid for Angola was taken, in what became the Second War of Liberation:

> "At the MPLA's request, Cuban arms and a number of officers of our armed forces sent to train the Angolan fighters arrived in mid-October. On October 23, the South African troops left Cunene with a great number of tanks and cannon and invaded Angola. On November 3, on the outskirts of Benguela, the Angolan students of the military school, together with a group of Cuban instructors, in difficult, disadvantageous conditions, stood up to the motorized troops of the South African racists. That day, November 3, 1975, was the first day on which Cubans were killed along with MPLA fighters. It was a difficult situation, but a decision had to be made. Comrade Neto and the MPLA made up their minds and requested our direct aid to face the South African racists, the puppets of imperialism and the regular troops from Zaire. Out Party decided to provide the support that our Angolan brothers requested." (*Granma*, 10/4/77)

The despatch of Cuban volunteers to Angola was code-named Operation Carlota, after a slave woman who led a black revolt in Cuba in 1843. Whilst the MPLA troops and the small contingent of Cuban instructors held the enemy at bay on the northern and southern fronts, the first Cuban contingent of 650 men left by air on November 7. Other troops left by sea and arrived off the Angolan coast on November 27. The crossing had taken 20 days in the face of much provocation from US ships and planes. Those were tense days in Angola. The South African racists were advancing in the south. The mercenaries, FNLA puppets and Zaire regulars were 25 kilometers from Luanda and were preparing to attack Cabinda. The imperialist plan, for so long in the cooking pot, aimed to instal Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi in office on independence day, November 11; occupying Cabinda and the whole of Angola on the same date.

It is history that the imperialist plan was defeated, that the blood of brave Cubans and Angolans was able to defend the revolution, and that by March 27, 1976 the South African racists, who considered themselves invincible, had been chased out of Angola. Of Cuba's selfless role in helping defeat the imperialist-inspired invasion Fidel has modestly stated:

> "I cannot say that we Cuban revolutionaries helped the Angolan revolutionaries. We simply did our international duty. Others ful-

filled these duties with us, and the Angolans will do their duty with other peoples. This is what internationalism means."

The lesson of Angola is clear. Imperialism is strong and no small country can repel imperialist aggression alone and unaided. But a world revolutionary movement exists, and so does the principle of proletarian internationalism. In the words of Fidel: "If imperialism wants to know what proletarian internationalism is, Angola is a fine example."

Technical and Economic Advances

What needs to be mentioned too is that Cuba, a small and by no means rich country, is prepared to tighten its belt and in that same spirit of internationalism with which it rendered military aid to Angola, provide whatever technical and economic assistance it can to the developing countries.

Socialism has been of great benefit to the Cuban people and this achievement is arousing considerable interest in the so-called third world countries whose continuing under-development so mirrors Cuba's past. In spite of the economic crisis of the capitalist world, the low sugar price and contraction of capitalist markets – including the arbitrary US embargo – the revolutionary government has met the basic needs of the people. There is no unemployment in Cuba, the infant mortality rate has dropped to levels comparable to those in the developed countries, illiteracy has been wiped out, the people enjoy an adequate diet, an outstanding health and hospitalisation service – the majority of pregnant women have their babies in hospital. There have been modest increases in housing, home appliances and clothing, with industrial output in 1975 76% greater than in 1960. Cuba has 105,000 university students and 800, 000 intermediate level students; an outstanding proportion in a population of 9 million. There are 11,000 doctors with over 1,000 new ones graduating every year together with engineers, architects, agronomists and technicians of every description. In the preparation of technical cadres for agricultural projects Cuba is among the world's leading countries. In sugar cane harvesting and processing, in fertilization and animal husbandry Cuba has built up an internationally recognised expertise.

All these achievements have been made possible by the radical transformation of the economic and social structure; by the people's hard

work; and by fair economic relations, based on equality, established with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. This is an impressive, even astonishing, catalogue of advance in a country that up until 20 years ago was classified as a "banana republic" totally dependent on a foreign power. "There is no real independence without revolution and no revolution without socialism", Fidel declared to the workers of Angola, exhorting them to greater effort in the task of reconstructing their country. *(Granma,* 3/4/77)

At a rally in the Golfe *museque,* Luanda's poorest and most populous quarter, Fidel told the people that "We too had our *museques* in Havana" and that it took time and hard work to solve the problem of the slums.

"These are the most difficult years", he said, "because the revolution must be consolidated and the country must be rebuilt, the economy must be set in motion again, defence must be strengthened, the country must be protected from foreign attack and bandits must be eliminated; there must be a struggle against ignorance and illiteracy." *(Granma,* 3/4/77)

As a practical example of his country's aid to Angola Fidel pointed out a team of Cuban bridge builders in the crowd, one of whom told the rally that 46 bridges would be built over the next 16 months.

When President Neto visited Cuba in July 1976, Fidel stated that several hundred Cuban technicians were then working in Angola and that the number would be increased to over 3,000. Cuba is helping Angola and other African countries in health and medical services, construction, education, fishing, sugar and coffee production; areas where it has much experience and expertise.

Throughout Africa one comes across Cuban volunteers in the service of friendly governments. At Ruvu in Tanzania Cuban construction workers are building three schools at a cost of £1, 600, 000 each. Cuba's aid programme includes an agricultural school, an artificial insemination project for cattle, and the cultivation of a 15, 000 acre sugar-cane plantation and processing factory near Kilosa. This project is expected to yield 15, 000 tons of sugar annually, to increase in time to 150, 000 tons. When Fidel visited Tanzania in March, 1977 he visited Cuban doctors and nurses working at hospitals in the Arusha area. In a speech he told Tanzanians: "We are poor but Tanzania is poorer. We would like to help you more but we cannot because out resources are

preoccupied in Angola." Cuba has undertaken to aid Mozambique in the establishment of a fisheries company, to train Mozambiquans in modern fisheries techniques and is assisting Mozambique in the setting up of a marine products trading network. Cuba has presented 18 tractors and 12 earth levelling machines to the Congolese state sugar growing company, and provided technical experts to advise on sugar cane cultivation and the industrial processing of sugar. Cuba is busy building houses and schools for Guinea-Bissau including a secondary school for 2, 000 pupils, as well as providing experts in the health and educational fields. As recently as July, 1977 Fidel has announced that Cuba is sending more than 300 doctors and medical staff to Ethiopia.

It is clear that while impressive economic strides are taking place in socialist Cuba, this "Island of Internationalism" is prepared to forego a proportion of those resources to offer greater and more effective solidarity to other peoples. This in itself is an outstanding example of proletarian internationalism. It is Revolutionary Cuba's deeds and actions that have won for it the love and respect of millions of peoples throughout the world. When Fidel visited the Soviet Union at the conclusion of his African tour this year, Leonard Brezhnev, speaking at a Moscow dinner in honour of the Cuban leader, was able to say: "The emergent countries see in the Soviet Union, Cuba and the other fraternal socialist states friends upon whom they can count". And Fidel was able to tell comrade Brezhnev: "On this trip I was able to see the great confidence the underdeveloped nations, the nations of Africa, the countries which lived under colonialism, have in the socialist camp and especially in the Soviet Union". (*Granma*, 17/4/77)

TURNING POINT IN NAMIBIA

by Phineas Malinga

There are a few peoples in the world who have had to endure a history of such naked and unrelieved exploitation as the people of Namibia. Colonialism came later to them than to many other African nations, but when it came, it came with a vengeance. The German Reich established a "protectorate" in 1885 over the territories of the Ovambo, the Herero and neighbouring peoples. The territory thus subjected to German rule was named German South West Africa. The pattern of rule which was at first established was one which was already old-fashioned by that time. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the classical period of pure free enterprise colonialism, in which colonies were conquered and governed by unofficial gangs of thieves, banded together in commercial companies. By the late nineteenth century, this sort of thing was frowned upon by "enlightened" imperialist opinion. The Dutch East India Company and the British East India Company were already things out of the past. Only two stunted specimens of the filthy species remained – the British South Africa Company under which

Zimbabwe bled and the Deutsche Koloniale Gesellschaft, formed to plunder Namibia. This organisation acquired land by the usual process of swindling and began the exploitation of Namibia's mineral wealth elsewhere.

It was not a success, even from the exploiters' point of view. The crude, hamfisted looting methods of an old-style colonial chartered company were appropriate to the exploitation of countries such as India or Indonesia, with their abundantly fertile agriculture and their vast stores of developed, accumulated wealth. Namibia, however, is an arid country with a fragile ecology. Its mineral wealth, except for a few easily accessible deposits, needed to be found by patient prospecting and worked by advanced methods.

The D.K.G. was not equal to the task. It found itself under attack in the Reichstag, where the demand was for other, more efficient exploiters to be allowed access to the country.

The final collapse of the D.K.G. was precipitated by the first war of liberation fought by the Namibian people. In 1903 and 1904 the people rose up and confronted the German occupation forces with the highest degree of heroism. Their lack of modern weapons doomed them to defeat. Thousands perished in a wave of brutal repression. The Germans then confiscated the territory of the Herero and Nama peoples, opened it up to white settlement and instituted a colonial government of a more up-to-date kind. The central region of Namibia, where the Herero lands had been confiscated, was now known as a Police Zone. It became a region of white landowners and black farm labourers, under the direct rule of a colonial civil service. In the northern region, the Ovambo people were left in possession of some of their territory, which became a labour reservoir, indirectly ruled through chiefs, along the lines of South Africa's notorious "native reserves". The pattern thus established has persisted in broad outline up to the present day.

Prominent among the "reforms" carried out by the German Government in 1905 was the Imperial Mining Decree for German South West Africa. This laid down the conditions under which mining concessions could be acquired. Prospecting was thrown open to all comers and the respective rights of prospectors and white landowners were regulated. The conditions under which prospecting and mining could take place on "native land" were left to be determined by district officers in their unfettered discretion. Thus the mineral wealth of Namibia became

available for exploitation by international finance capital. These arrangements proved so satisfactory to the capitalists that the main provisions of the Decree of 1905 are still in force at the present day and have been described by the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company as more satisfactory than the mining legislation of the Transvaal. During the remaining years of German rule, diamonds, copper and tin were mined.

A Change of Thief

Namibia then passed from the hands of the original thief into those of a receiver of stolen property. In the imperialist war of 1914 - 1918, the German occupying force was defeated by troops of the Union of South Africa commanded by the imperialist hatchet men, Louis Botha and Jan Christian Smuts. At the Versailles Peace Conference, considerable difficulty was experienced in reconciling the plain, down-to-earth expansionist views of these gentlemen with the fancy neo-colonialist schemes of Woodrow Wilson and Lloyd George.

The League of Nations mandate system, which might be regarded as the starting point of twentieth century neo-colonialism, was supposed to be something quite different from ordinary imperialist annexation. Annexation, however, was precisely what Botha and Smuts were after. The solution eventually arrived at was the grant to South Africa of a "C Mandate" over Namibia. This permitted South Africa to administer Namibia "as an integral portion of its territory", subject only to a theoretical supervisory power vested in the Council of the League of Nations. The only result of that supervisory power was a series of futile complaints, made at intervals throughout the period 1919 - 1939, by the League against the conduct of the South African government. The South Africans consistently ignored these complaints and treated Namibia as their private property.

They found it unnecessary to make any radical changes in the socio-economic structure set up by German colonialism. South African whites joined German landowners in farming the stolen lands of the Police Zone. Ovamboland and the various smaller pockets of territory remaining in African ownership continued to function as labour reservoirs. International finance capital continued to extend its mining activities under the favourable regime of the 1905 Decree.

As the decades have gone by since 1919, Namibia has become a veritable Eldorado for the great multinational mining monopolies of the imperialist world. The fabulous alluvial diamond deposits near the Orange River mouth, the great copper mine at Tsumeb and the notorious Rossing uranium venture are widely known but they represent only a fraction of the total picture. A list of foreign owned mining operations in Namibia compiled by a recent research worker, is published at the end of this article.

Every one of these companies is carrying on its activities in defiance of the United Nations Security Council. In 1966, after years of fruitless attempts to negotiate some form of agreement by which South Africa would have placed Namibia under the United Nations trusteeship system, with a view to early independence, the General Assembly formally declared that the South African mandate was at an end. The United Nations Council for Namibia was set up to administer the territory until independence. South Africa has defied this resolution, as all the earlier resolutions of the League of Nations and the United Nations were defied. In 1971, an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice confirmed the illegality of South Africa's occupation of Namibia and the illegality of dealings by other states with South Africa as possessor of Namibian territory and resources. This again made no difference to South African intransigence. In its resolution 301, the Security Council endorsed this opinion and in 1974, the U.N. Decree on Namibian Natural Resources specifically forbade the exploitation of Namibian natural resources under South African occupation and gave the U.N. Council for Namibia power to confiscate, on behalf of the Namibian people, any natural resources exported form Namibia without U.N. consent.

South African defiance has still continued and it is perfectly obvious that it can do so only with the connivance of the leading capitalist countries. Virtually all the products of the mining companies listed above are exported outside South Africa. Their activities would have to come to an immediate halt if international law, as clearly laid down by the U.N. and the International Court, were being observed by the countries to which these products are being exported. Among the receivers of stolen property, the Labour Government of Britain must be specially mentioned, by reason of its notorious contract for the pur-

chase of uranium ore mined by the Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation at Rossing, in Namibia. This contract has been entered into *since* the U.N. revocation of the South African mandate. It has been maintained in spite of repeated demands by the national liberation movement, SWAPO, by the Anti-Apartheid Movement and other solidarity organisations, and by the Labour Party Conference, for its abrogation. The so-called "Left Wing" Labour Minister, Anthony Wedgwood Benn, has been personally involved in this transaction, which shows more vividly than anything else could do, the cynical readiness of capitalism the world over to join in the plundering of the world's few remaining, old-style colonies.

The People's Struggle

It was not possible for the Namibian people to recover quickly from the defeat of 1904. Less than a million in number, widely scattered over a large territory, isolated form the mainstream of African political activity, they could not easily build a national movement capable of confronting the power of colonialism. Nevertheless, the flame of resistance was not at any time extinguished. In 1923, the Bondelswarts Rebellion led to a massacre with which the reputation of Jan Christian Smuts was stained for ever afterwards. Throughout the League of Nations period, the people tried to use the League's machinery to bring their grievances to the attention of the world. In the early post-war period, when the Namibian issue began to be taken up by the United Nations, it was not the spontaneous benevolence of any member state of the U.N. which placed the matter on the agenda, but the initiative of the Namibians themselves. Political organisation was then still in a rudimentary state and the only channels through which Namibian demands could be expressed were the hereditary chiefs, acting in co-operation with Christian missionaries. Certain chiefs and certain clergymen rendered valuable service in those days but, not surprisingly, proved unable to move forward with the people to higher forms of struggle.

The conditions for higher forms of struggle began to ripen from the fifties onwards. The scale of exploitation was growing and the proletariat becoming more numerous. The disappointing results achieved by making representations to the U.N. brought home to the people the need for other methods. The upsurge of the liberation struggle in other

parts of Africa provided inspiration and education. The shift of world power towards the socialist camp made it possible for small nations to achieve things which had not been possible before.

Several militant political organisations appeared and one of them – SWAPO – rapidly moved into a position of leadership. Fraternal links were forged by SWAPO with the ANC, MPLA and other national liberation organisations. The struggle was pushed forward by a variety of means. Today, a mature national liberation struggle, embracing education, agitation, industrial action and guerilla warfare, is in progress in Namibia and is moving inexorably towards victory.

The enemy, however, has not yet conceeded the inevitability of the people's victory. The South African racists have two reasons for fighting desperately to prevent the liberation of Namibia. The first appears plainly enough from the list of the plunderers of Namibia's mineral wealth. They are not going to stop their plundering without a fight. The second is the effect which Namibian liberation will have upon South Africa itself. Profoundly though the existing achievements of African liberation have changed the perspectives for South Africa, the Nationalists have until now always been able to say, "*We* have not yet been defeated. *We* are different. *We* shall not give way as the decadent European imperialists have given way." When Namibia is free, that sort of braggadocio will no longer be possible. Apartheid will for the first time have relinquished territory which it considers as its own. South African racism will stand face to face with its doom.

Therefore the racists have launched wave after wave of brutal repression, at the cost of many brave freedom fighters' lives. Therefore, at the same time, the racists and their imperialist supporters have resorted to one manoeuvre after another to deceive world opinion, divide the Namibian people, drive wedges between Namibia and her allies, and to concoct some sort of neo-colonist facade behind which the plundering can go on.

First came the Odendaal Commission of 1964, with its impudent scheme for the division of Namibia into a "white area", containing most of Namibia's resources, which would have become a fifth province of the Republic of South Africa, and a number of tiny "Bantu homelands", which would have received bogus independence on the Transkei model. When it became clear that this would not serve its purpose of pulling the wool over enough eyes, the Turnhalle Conference was

wheeled on to take its place. Now the principle was conceded that Namibia should eventually become an independent state, but efforts were made to construct a phoney constitution, based on separate representation for "ethnic" groups which would ensure continued South African domination. Elaborate efforts were made to obtain stooge representatives of the African people to take part in the conference. A few chiefs and others fell for this deception, but the people as a whole, thanks to the clear and principled stand of SWAPO, were firm in their rejection.

The Turnhalle Conference plodded on, in spite of the clear refusal of the people to have anything to do with it, and produced an elaborate "draft constitution" in which pseudo-democratic gimmicks were combined with a racist foundation in the most bizarre fashion.

Now South Africa's imperialist partners took a hand in the matter. Realising the impossibility of selling the Turnhalle abortion to world opinion, and aware of the relentlessly growing strength of the liberation movement, the USA, West Germany, France, Britain and Canada presented a joint demand to Vorster that he should think of something better. The essence of their proposals lies in an attempt to turn aside the momentum of the militant liberation struggle by organising elections under imperialist supervision, in the hope that these will lead to the installation of a docile Namibian government, willing to fit into a neo-colonialist role.

This manoeuvre presents the people with both dangers and opportunities. Africa has examples to show, both of revolutions checked and puppet regimes successfully installed by this sort of method, and of liberation movements which have triumphantly outmanoeuvred the imperialists and injected revolutionary content into what were intended to be reformist, neo-colonial frameworks. The coming months will be critical ones for Namibia. Given vigilance and solidarity on the part of all the popular forces in Namibia and their allies throughout the world, there is every reason to hope that 1978 will bring plainly into sight the end of this tragic story of robbery and oppression.

Base Metals

Namibian Company	Location of Mines	Minerals/Rights	Foreign Interests
South West Africa Company Ltd. Registered in London 1892.	Berg Aukas Brandberg West 3000 sq. miles in Damaraland.	Lead/Vanadate Lead/Zinc Sulphide Zinc/Silicate Tin/Wolfram Mining/Production Prospecting Rights Freehold Land	Technical Managers,Gold Fields of SA Ltd., an associate of Cons. Gold Fields Ltd of UK. in 1957 92% of the equity bought by a consortium: Anglo-American, British-SA Co (Charter Cons.). CGF Ltd.
Tsumeb Corporation of SWA Ltd. Registered in SWA in 1947	Kombat Matchless (Windhoek) Tsumeb 1,788 hectares	Copper/lead Copper/Sulphur Copper/Lead/Zinc concentrates Cadmium/Vanadium/Silver Mining/Production Smelting/Prospecting Rights/Grazing Land	American Metal Climax, Newmont Mining Corp.control the TC with 29% holding each: Selection Trust 14%, Union Corp. 15.9%. O'okiep Copper Co 9%, SWA Co 2.5%.

Namibian Company	Location of Mines	Minerals/Rights	Foreign Interests
Uis Tin Mining Company (SWA) Ltd & Imcor Zinc (Pty) Ltd. Both registered in SWA	Uis (Okombahe Res) Rosh Pinah (Aus) 1971	Tin/Wolfram Zinc concentrates Lead concentrates 3,800 t/day at Uis rising to 110,000 t/month by 1972	The SA Iron & Steel Industrial Corporation Ltd operates the Uis mine, buying up the entire output. ISCOR holds 51% of Imcor Zinc, Moly Copper Mining & Exploration Co SWA Ltd holds 49%
Klein Aub Copper Company Ltd Registered in SWA in late 1960's.	Klein Aub (Rehoboth Gebiet)	Copper ore Proven reserves of 1.5m tons.	Technical Managers, Gen. Mining/ Federale Mynbou. GM/FM is an associated company of the Federale Volksbeleggings Cp (assets R [illegible] m) as is Marine Products Ltd which both have substantial holdings in Klein Aub together with FVB.
Navarro Exploration Company (Pty) Ltd.	Onganja mine at Seeis near Windhoek. 1967.	Copper ore 100/150 tons a day.	Wholly owned by Navarro Exploration Company of the US. Taken over in 1968 by Zapata Norness Inc of the U.S.
Nord Mining & Exploration (Pty) Ltd.	Krantzberg mine at Omaruru.	Tin/Wolfram	Nord Resources Corporation of New Mexico (U.S.).

Namibian Company	Location of Mines	Minerals/Rights	Foreign Interests
Oamites Mining Company (Pty) Ltd Registered in SWA in 1969.	Oamites 1971 (Rehoboth Gebiet)	Copper ore 1200 t/day expanding to 1650 t/day by 1973.	Wholly-owned subsidiary of Falconbridge Nickel Mines of Canada. Investment of £5.6m.
Lorelei Copper Mines Ltd. Registered in Luderitz 1960.	Warmbad District Orange River.	Copper Ore. Owns mineral rights along the SWA side of the Orange River	33% participation by Moly Copper Mining, Industrial Diamonds of SA Ltd. Diamond Mining & Utility Co (SWA) Ltd.
Rössing Uranium Ltd. Registered in SWA in 1968.	Rössing near Swakopmund.	Development and production (1976) of low-grade uranium deposits. £150m development 5 sq. miles area.	RTZ of the UK through its associate Rio Tinto SA (Pty) Ltd controls the venture. After collapse of initial German participation (Urangesellschaft), exploitation is to be in partnership with GM/FM and the SA Atomic Energy Authority NUFCOR, part of Ind.Dev. Corp. of SA.

Namibian Company	Location of Mines	Minerals/Rights	Foreign Interests
SWA Lithium Mines (Pty) Ltd.	Karibib & Usakos Helicon and Rubicon mines	Lithium ores, Columbite/Bismuth Ambligonite/Petalite Lepidolite	Majority shareholding in the company by Duisberg/Wann-heim, a subsidiary of the Metallgesellschaft Company of West Germany.
Samangen SWA (Pty) Ltd. Registered in SWA in 1969.	Swakopmund	Manganese/Chrome	Wholly-owned subsidiary of SA Manganese Ltd.
Tantalite Valley Minerals (Pty) Ltd.	Karasburg (Warmbad district)	Tantalite/Bismuth Beryllium/Scheelite	Not known
Kiln Products Ltd.	Berg Aukas SWACO property	Zinc Oxide Production agreement with SWA Co.Ltd.	49% participation by Cons.Gold Fields Ltd, 30% participation by the Anglo-American Corp.Ltd.
Associated Tin Mines of SWA Ltd.	Omaruru	Tin/Wolfram mining rights in the Brand-berg/Cape Cross Dis-trict.	Strathmore Services; part of the FVB group.

Diamonds

Consolidated Diamond Mines of SWA Ltd. Registered in SA 1920. Subsidiaries: Marine Diamond Corporation Ltd (83%). Orama Holdings Ltd (92%). Sea Diamond Corporation Ltd (53%) Tidal Diamonds SWA (Pty) Ltd (66-2/3%). Marmora Mines & Estates Ltd (wholly owned) SW Finance Corporation Ltd (wholly owned) Capital: R10m.	Oranjemund Alluvial diggings at the mouth of the Orange R. Diamond Area No.1 Diamond Area No.2 Concession areas totalling 10,259 sq. miles.	Gem diamonds on and offshore in Southern Namibia. Concession which previously expired in 1972 extended by the SWA administration to Dec 31st 2010. De Beers/ Tidewater Oil agreement in 1966. Two companies + CDM to pool diamond rights & concessions in DA 2 + concessions in the adjacent sea bed. Rights/concessions transferred to Tidal Diamonds SWA-2/3 CDM, 1/3 Getty Oil Co (Tidewater) 1969 CDM/GO agreement with Diamond Mining & Utility Co to forego its diamond rights in areas where Tidal is operating.	CDM of SWA is a subsidiary of De Beers Cons.Mines which owned 97% in 1963. Tidewater Oil Co is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Getty Oil Co. of the U.S.

Diamond Mining & Utility Company (SWA) Ltd. Registered at Luderitz in 1948. SWA investments: Diamond Dredging & Mining Co. (SWA) Ltd (45%), DD & M has a 47% participation in the Moly Copper Co.Ltd. Lorelei Copper Mines (33%), Tidal Diamonds (33 and 1/3%).	Diamond Area No.2 Hottentot Bay — Sandfisch Bay from 3 miles out to sea to the continental shelf.	Land and off-shore concessions under Deeds of Grant.In 1969, offshore rights ceded to Tidal Diamonds. Sea Grant M46/3/100: All minerals other than oil/ gas, prescribed materials. Entitled to 75% of royalty accruing to SOEKOR.	12½% participation by Industrial Diamonds of SA, which holds 48% of the Diamond Dredging and Mining Co, which holds 10% in DM & U Co.
Strathmore Services and Finance Corporation Ltd.	Diamond separation plant in Northern Namibia, at Terrace Bay (Toscanin mine)	Off-shore rights to the coastal area between the Hoanib and Unjub Rivers for width of 3 miles.	Strathmore Development Company Ltd, a subsidiary of Sentrust Beperk, a part of Federale Volksbeleggings Group of SA.
Brazil Benguella Exploration & Finance (Pty) Ltd.		1971 concession for diamonds on the lower Orange River.	Devex Ltd of Australia has a 15% interest along with Steller Mining NL of Australia.

Marine Diamond Corporation Ltd. Registered in SWA in 1961	Orange River to Diaz Point (Lüderitz)	Recovery of diamonds from the sea bed. Acquired from previous companies concessions which entitled it to mine & prospect between the low water mark and a line 3 n. miles out until Dec.1997. Rt to all minerals betw.w. boundary of above area to continental shelf until 1983.	Initially established by US interests, taken over in 1964 by De Beers CDM has a 3-year renewable lease from January 1971 on the off-shore rights.

(Taken from *Namibia* by L. Lazar, published 1972 by the Mandate Trust, London.)

Sudan's Communists point the way forward

by A. Langa

The North-East of Africa is currently the most important area, after the South, of sharp, armed struggle over the future political direction of our continent. It is also exceptionally complex and confusing, a situation in which class forces, national interests and imperialist initiatives combine in conflict in sometimes unexpected ways. It is certainly the duty of all Communists and African patriots to understand the problems facing our brothers in the region in their struggle against imperialism and domestic reaction, and thereby to render the necessary solidarity and support for the revolutionary forces.

The brave campaign of the Communist Party of the Sudan is crucial to that struggle: it is doubly important, therefore, that Sudan's Communists have produced an excellent analysis not only of the internal situation under the Nimeiri regime, but of the way in which Nimeiri's alliances and policies tie up with the entire imperialist offensive affecting Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Egypt and Libya. The

Sudanese Party has withstood exceptional and bloody repression through long periods of its history, and particularly under the regime of the butcher Nimeiri since 1971. Despite the loss through execution of leading cadres such as Abdul Khalig Mahjoub and Joseph Garang, the Party has maintained its principled stand, pushed forward with work among the masses, and worked steadily to build a National Democratic Front to obliterate Nimeiri and defeat imperialism's strategy in the Horn and North-East Africa.

The analysis of Sudan's internal and international situation to which we refer here was produced before the tragic escalation of armed conflict between Ethiopian and Somali forces, and before the outrageous Egyptian aggression against Libya. Nevertheless, this profound analysis illuminates these developments in all important respects, and demands close study.

Arab Counter-revolution

There are a number of linked elements which our Sudanese comrades point out as crucial to understanding the overall situation in the countries mentioned, and particularly of course the pivotal role of Sudan itself. Firstly, reactionary Arab regimes are entering the African political stage in a big way, closely allied to imperialism. The main force in this tendency is the regime of Saudi Arabia, unimaginably wealthy with the oil price increases in recent years, apparently secure as far as its own backward and oppressed population is concerned, and determined to emerge as a world capitalist power under the ideological guise of extreme reactionary Muslim bigotry and Arab expansionism. Thus there has developed what the Sudanese Communists call the Cairo-Riyadh Axis, whereby Sadat's bankrupt regime has become one of the main planks of Saudi policy in Africa – establishing a military and then a political/military so-called Egyptian and Syrian " joint command" with Sudan, under Saudi auspices, in 1976/7.

The objective was crystal-clear: to prop up the faltering regimes in Egypt and Sudan, rocked (particularly in the former case) by popular struggles and insurrections, to establish anti-Communism as the official "doctrine" for the entire region, and to prepare the way for the complete elimination of progressive and revolutionary forces in Somalia,

Ethiopia and Libya as well. Hence the aggression against Libya in order to bring down Ghaddafy; hence the brutal suppression of the Egyptian masses when they rose up against intolerable conditions and against the handing-over of the small gains of the "Egyptian Revolution" to domestic and foreign capitalists. Hence the offers of blank military and economic cheques in an attempt to persuade the Somali government to abandon the socialist and revolutionary camp. And hence the bankrolling and military aid for any and all forces working to bring down the revolutionary regime in Ethiopia.

All this has demanded the pouring into these reactionary schemes of Saudi money and weaponry, the use of Egyptian troops as the janissaries of Saudi "pan-Arab" policy in Libya and Sudan, and the propagation of Arab chauvinism and manic anti-Communism as the ideological vehicles for Saudi designs. As the Sudanese comrades say

> **" . . . . one of this strategy's aims is to devise a 'sanitation belt' targeted on the offsetting of the revolutionary processes taking place inside Somalia, South Yemen and Ethiopia, as a step towards the eventual toppling down of those regimes....**
> **"With the establishment of the Riyadh-Cairo Axis, Sudan is rapidly being transformed into a handy tool of the imperialists and Arab reactionary regimes, in their endeavour to re-shape the patterns inside the Afro-Arab region."**

Imperialism's Strategy

This analysis points clearly to the fact that, of course, the Saudis, Egyptians, Syrians and the rest are not acting alone in this onslaught on progressive forces. On the contrary: the major imperialist powers have assigned high priority to liquidating revolution in the Horn of Africa, in line with the policy of dismantling all progressive forces – Palestinian, Yemeni and the rest – in the West Asian and Northern African regions, and instituting instead a new era of imperialist domination, with Israel secure in the absence of the PLO, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the feudal sheikhdoms buttressed by vast militarization and the overthrow of progressive regimes, and the gains of the Arab Revolution overturned by the reactionary and aggressive ruling classes in Morocco, Egypt and Syria in particular.

This is not merely a general feature of imperialist strategy: on the contrary, it is a specific, explicit plan, the main elements of which have been clear since the realignment following the oil blockade in 1973. The *new* element is the intensity of the onslaught in Africa – an onslaught in which, as we have said, the Nimeiri regime plays a crucial role.

The aim in this context, in the words of the London *Guardian* (July 29, 1977), is a 'plan to detach Somalia from the Soviet sphere of influence through arms, credits and diplomatic support'. This plan (typically phrased in insulting terms of 'Soviet sphere', since the imperialist press is naturally incapable of conceiving of the world except in its own bankrupt terms) was put forward by Vance and Owen, for the U.S. and Britain, at the CENTO conference in June, supported by three other Nato powers – France, Italy and West Germany – and by the primary clients of imperialism in West Asia – the Saudis, Iran and Pakistan.

The liquidation of the Somali Revolution is the first stage of the plan; the dismemberment of progressive Ethiopia its intended accompaniment. Sudan's aggressive moves against Ethiopia are integral, and its role as the 'handy tool' of imperialism cannot be too highly stressed.

Neocolonialism in Sudan

The basis for this use of the Sudan has been laid in the rapid penetration of imperialist and Arab capital into this vast country under the auspices and protection of Nimeiri. The Sudanese comrades analyse the forces involved with great clarity:

> "Since the right-wing coup d'etat of 16 November 1970, the present regime in the Sudan has abandoned the previous progressive programme declared on 25th May 1969 and adopted a persistent capitalist-oriented policy which had a free hand after the defeat of the uprising of progressive officers in July 1971 and the bloody liquidation of the anti-capitalist and democratic forces.
>
> "The capitalist drive, which was intensified in 1973, is led by the complex of the bureaucracy and parasitic speculative capital which cultivated mutual interests with foreign capital and neo-colonialist institutions. Those institutions are now planning and gradually steer-

> ing capitalist construction in the country dependent on neo-colonialism and foreign monopoly capital. In order to achieve this strategy, they are seeking hegemony over the capitalist strata in Sudan, forcing them...to abandon their relative independence and be linked to neo-colonialist institutions as a base for compromise and agreement between the local bourgeoisie and imperialism. In this process they are trying to smooth out contradictions between different capitalist strata...and cultivating anti-democratic and anti-national attitudes among them."

Thus foreign capital has been pouring into the Sudan, often in the form of a "partnership" of US monopoly capital and Arab petrodollars, with privileged access to the industrial sector of the economy, free passage for the American and Arab financial monopolies (contrasting with the tough nationalisation of British banks in 1970 before Nimeiri's counter-revolution), and, most ominously of all perhaps, the wholesale penetration of Sudan's agricultural sector, with all its enormous potential, by imperialist and Arab big money. So Lonrho, the aggressive imperialist conglomerate which is now largely financed by Kuwaiti dollars, has big (though economically troubled) sugar schemes, while Sudanese capitalists are being drawn in as "front-office" junior partners with foreign speculators in meat-export ranching activities. In Blue Nile Province, meanwhile, King Saud has appropriated 50,000 hectares of land in the traditional sector, opening it up for capitalism, while Emir Faisal has robbed the Sudanese people of 200, 000 hectares under "leases"! Small wonder, then, that the reactionary rulers of the Persian Gulf, and their imperialist sponsors, talk about petrodollars transforming Sudan into the "granary and cattle-ranch" for the Middle East.

But of course, except for the parasitic minority favoured by and subservient to the Nimeiri gang, there are few Sudanese who feel any benefit – indeed, the Communist Party of the Sudan has shown clearly that the results of this subservience have been economic and political crisis, and growing impoverishment for the great mass of the Sudanese people. Inflows of foreign capital, growing foreign debt, and the orienting of the economy to the interests of big capital and its local sidekicks has produced rising unemployment, the expropriation of petty producers in both urban and rural areas, and a fast-developing struc-

tural crisis of the economy as a whole.

Our Sudanese comrades point out that it is therefore not surprising that the regime is faced with mounting opposition and problems of political control.

> **"Inflation, mass unemployment, corruption and other crisis phenomena, resulting from the present regime's socio-economic, financial and foreign policies linking our country ever more closely with the crisis-stricken capitalist world, have coupled with an equally reactionary domestic policy, whose main traits are lack of democratic rights and freedoms, continued repressions and arbitrary measures against opposition forces in general. All these have led to the regime's growing isolation on an unprecedented scale, with the forces of popular opposition gaining both in scale and depth."**

One response to the Nimeiri regime, which the Communists analyse and criticise carefully, is the so-called "National Front", made up of the traditional Umma and Unionist Parties, plus elements of the rabid Moslem Brotherhood. These parties, still enjoying a measure of support among semi-feudal and bourgeois strata, and among the reactionary religious/chauvinist elements of the intelligentsia, have been responsible for two putschist actions against the regime, both of which have failed to command mass support in the streets, and which have resulted in further repressions. As the Communist Party states:

> **"The parties of the National Front were actually the inventors of the idea of the presidential Republic, which concentrates unthinkable powers in the hands of the President, in the American style, as a form of effecting capitalist reforms in favour of foreign capitalist penetration and domination. There is no indication that these parties have renounced this idea, nor that they are not going to repeat what they did towards the end of 1965, when they shelved the constitution, resorted to violence, and launched armed attacks against the CP headquarters and Party organisations, and expelled the Communist MP's in flagrant violation of elementary democratic rights and freedoms."**

So the Communist Party of the Sudan has dissociated itself from the so-called National Front, and has based itself instead on the Leninist policy of consolidating all *progressive* elements of Sudanese society around the most urgent tasks of the democratic revolution: dismantling the old State apparatus in favour of a new democratic one, genuine agrarian reform, democratization of education, a truly democratic solu-

tion to the question of national minorities and in particular to the problems of the Southern Sudan, freeing the economy from the neo-colonial yoke by curbing capitalist development and strengthening the public sector, and pursuing an anti-imperialist foreign policy.

The forces in principle on the side of this truly democratic revolution comprise the working class as the leading force, the poor and middle peasantry, revolutionary intellectuals (historically a particularly important category in the Sudanese people's struggles), sections of the army officers, the bulk of the soldiery, who are from peasant and working class families, and the sections of the national bourgeoisie who are not ensnared in the web of foreign capital. These are the forces represented in the National Democratic Front which the Party, in common with other patriotic and revolutionary organizations, is struggling to build among the Sudanese people, and which provides the only viable political vehicle for overthrowing the Nimeiri clique and defeating imperialism's designs in North East Africa generally.

The Communist Party has opposed putschism and adventurism, and pointed out that, in the situation where counter-revolutionary forces are currently dominant, the people's struggles are initially primarily defensive, aimed at laying the foundation for higher forms of political action in the trade unions, in the peasant movements, among intellectuals and soldiers. The aim is to bring ever broader masses of the people into active political campaigns around their immediate interests and needs, and so to build an enduring base. In doing so the National Democratic Front will bring the progressive classes and strata closer to unity in the anti-Nimeiri struggle, and even incorporate elements of the rank and file of the traditional Umma and Unionist Parties, but – and the CP is clear on this point – excluding the *entire* Moslem Brotherhood movement. Within this broad anti-imperialist unity, however, the leadership of the working class and its vanguard will be progressively strengthened, by enhancing the political organization and ideological consciousness of the class as the unquestionable leading social force of the Sudanese revolution.

It is no surprise that this glorious party, which with the South African Party is among the oldest African standard-bearers of Communism, sees clearly, too, that the strategy of the national-democratic revolution in the Sudan is closely linked with the international solidarity of the

communist movement, and with the struggles of the national-liberation movements of Africa, Palestine and the rest of the imperialist-dominated world. The Sudanese comrades have shown us very clearly how the struggle in their country is vital to every African and every revolutionary, and deserves support from progressive forces everywhere.

Also available from

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Moses Kotane: South African Revolutionary
by Brian Bunting. Price: South Africa R5.00; Africa £1.50;
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ETHIOPIA UNDER FIRE

As we go to press, the revolutionary government of Ethiopia is under increasing attack from the forces of local reaction and international imperialism determined to halt the progress of the revolution and even threatening the integrity of the Ethiopian state.

In this interview printed in *Neues Deutschland*, organ of the Socialist Unity Party of the German Democratic Republic on February 25, 1977, the chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council of Ethiopia, *Mengistu Haile Mariam*, outlines the aims and achievements of the revolutionary government.

QUESTION: Comrade Chairman, how can you characterise the development in Ethiopia?

ANSWER: As you know, our revolution can be characterised as follows: Firstly, it is of a national democratic character. National democratic because our struggle is anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist. This struggle against the three enemies of the Ethiopian people is not only in the interests of the working class and the peasants but also in the interests of the progressive forces of the petty bourgeoisie

and the national bourgeoisie. That is why it is a national and democratic revolution.

Secondly, our revolution is characterised by the fact that the progressive forces which are fighting against feudalism, imperialism and capitalism are striving for their democratic rights. We say this is new because this revolution which we are today leading differs fundamentally from the bourgeois revolution of the last century in that we are here trying to build a foundation for socialism. That is the most important characteristic of the national democratic revolution in Ethiopia.

In the last two years of our national democratic revolution the progressive forces in Ethiopia and the popular masses have achieved great successes. Firstly, through the struggle of the popular masses we have seized power from the feudal bourgeois classes of Ethiopia and we destroyed the monarchy. An important and decisive success is that our struggle is being led on the basis of scientific socialism. Another important success of the last two years was that the people of Ethiopia destroyed the old feudal production relations and that means the realisation of the agrarian reform in the interests of the peasants, the dispossession of the big landowners, the nationalisation of big factories and insurance companies, banks and other important production factories.

Naturally, here one should also add the fact that we have abolished the right of inheritance of houses and lands which earlier belonged to the big landowners. These are only a few examples of some achievements of the Ethiopian people in the last two years. For us they are foundations and bases for the construction of socialism in Ethiopia.

We are now in a period in which our revolution consolidates itself. We call it a period of consolidation because we cannot lose the positions which we have already achieved. We must secure the revolution. In the countryside the peasants have organised themselves into peasant organisations. In these organisations they have their own leadership, their own popular legal organs, and they have also partly armed themselves. A step towards the consolidation of our revolution is the unity of all the peasants on a national scale and at the present moment we are working on that. What we are also working on is the organisation of the working class in Ethiopia. After the nationalisation of the big factories and concerns, the workers have organised themselves in three categories. Firstly, at factory level where the workers have their own leadership. Secondly, according to profession and thirdly, in the All-Ethiopian Trade Union.

This has been accomplished with great success and the workers are participating in the construction and consolidation of the revolution with great enthusiasm. I also want to mention that in the cities the oppressed masses have formed democratic urban organisations. They have their own elected leadership, their own popular legal system and many other things. We are now building women's and youth organisations, organising all the patriotic forces.

Workers' Party

The fundamental goal is to bring together all the progressive forces and mass organisations so as to build a proletarian party. The formation of this proletarian party will enable us to build a People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. In our opinion the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia will be realised through the leadership of the working-class party, through a centralised economic administration and through the whole administration of the country which will lead it to socialism.

QUESTION: In your last speech you said we have moved from a defensive to an offensive position. May I please ask you to explain how you would characterise the present situation in Ethiopia.

ANSWER: When we say that our revolution has moved from a defensive to an offensive position, this is not quite correct. Naturally in 1974 the beginning of the revolution was already an offensive.

In the last months there were elements within the Military Council who were naturally members of different counter-revolutionary organisations e.g. the EDU, an organisation of aristocrats, the ELF, a separatist group which is supported by reactionary Arabic governments. With the help of some forces within the Provisional Military Administrative Council these elements have tried in the last months to stop the revolutionary process and have shot a number of our comrades in the streets. In this they were assisted by the imperialist forces. Recently these forces within the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) tried to hinder the progressive development.

After the elimination of these reactionary forces within PMAC it became possible to inspire the people for the idea of the revolution, to continue the revolution, to defend the unity of the country so that the people of Ethiopia might have peace and happiness in their country and

build their own future. When we say that we have moved from a defensive to an offensive position, then that means the arming of the oppressed masses and the organisation of armed struggle against the enemies of the revolution. We are sure that it will be possible to win victory over the reactionary forces.

QUESTION: In which way are the progressive forces striving to involve the masses in the different fields of state power?

ANSWER: The Ethiopian progressive forces and the oppressed people of Ethiopia can only be sure of their victory when they organise and arm themselves. The ideological struggle is also necessary – that is, the struggle against the reactionaries.

Then it will be possible in Ethiopia to establish real people's power. As we have already expressed this in the programme of the national democratic revolution, the PMAC is being supported by all progressive forces in their struggle and that is also the struggle against feudalism, imperialism and capitalism. We support all the forces here in this country which are fighting against these three enemies.

We have also built a provisional organisation of the masses which is being supported by progressive forces who have fought since the period of the rule of Haile Selassie. This organisation functions all over the country stretching from the capital Addis Ababa to the outlying districts. The mass organisations are working, and we hope that this work will give possibilities for the people to participate in the revolution. In the recent past we have achieved some successes. These organisations unite the people against the main enemies of Ethiopia – feudalism, imperialism and capitalism – and lay the basis for building a proletarian party. Only through the building of a proletarian party will it be possible to establish a People's Republic in Ethiopia. The Marxist-Leninist organisations which today exist in this country are working with the aim of uniting all progressive forces. This should lead to a revolutionary united front of the different Marxist-Leninist organisations and groups. We hope that intensified work of these groups amongst the masses which we as PMAC are supporting with all our strength, will eventually lead to such unity and to the formation of a Marxist-Leninist party. Through that and through the active participation of the masses it will be possible to transfer power to the party. The PMAC and the whole military are supporting these forces materially

and morally. As soon as a situation is created where the unity and organisation of the masses are guaranteed, the people will be able to exercise power.

QUESTION: Which line are you following in foreign policy?

ANSWER: As expressed in the National Democratic Programme, our foreign policy is based on the well-known five principles: peace, freedom, equality, neutrality, respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. Naturally we are for relations based on absolute equality.

The new Ethiopia is standing with all progressive forces in the world in the fight against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and racism. We stand together hand in hand with all progressive forces in Africa, Latin America, Asia and especially with the forces of the national liberation movements which are still fighting for freedom in their countries. We all stand together and we help them morally and materially as much as we can and as long as it is necessary.

QUESTION: Comrade Chairman, you have personally made a gre contribution to the implementation of the historic changes of the Ethiopian society. In this process the German Democratic Republic and the other socialist countries have from the very beginning supported the revolutionary forces in Ethiopia. Would you like to say a few words to the GDR people?

ANSWER: I want to use this occasion to express heartfelt gratitude to all socialist countries and to the people of the GDR. Our people know the great help and support which we have received and still receive from the GDR and the party of the working class, that is, political and economic assistance. Since the beginning of our revolution we have received this active support. We are of the opinion that the solidarity between our two countries in the economic and political fields is very fruitful.

The great international help which we have received from all the socialist countries has strengthened us in our struggle. The progresseve forces in Ethiopia, the PMAC, the workers and peasants, have seen quite clearly the great solidarity which the Socialist Unity Party of

Germany and the people of the GDR have rendered. The sincere and great friendship between our two countries and especially the visits of comrades Werner Lamberz and Oscar Fischer have further strengthened our friendship. This is to us a great step in the strengthening of the relations of the Ethiopian people and the people of the GDR.

(Translated by *The African Communist*.)

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the context of the South African liberation

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BOOK REVIEWS

CLASS AND RACE OPPRESSION IN THE U.S.

Organised Labor and the Black Worker 1619 - 1973
by Philip S. Foner, published by International Publishers, New York, 1976. 4.50 dollars. 489 pp.

What is the relationship between class exploitation and racial oppression under capitalism? Can racial oppression ever be destroyed without the overthrow of the capitalist system of social relations on which it rests, and the building of socialism? In the recent debate on the "National Question", the *African Communist* has again raised these central questions of the South African revolution.

These issues are not unique to South Africa. In a strikingly similar way they confront our comrades in the major imperialist country, the USA. Foner's book offers a useful insight into some aspects of these crucial political problems.

In the Preface the major theme of the book is set out:

> **"(F)rom the formation of the first trade unions in the 1790's to the mid-1930's, the policy and practice of organized labour so far as**

> **black workers were concerned were largely those of outright exclusion or segregation. Yet, as this study also makes clear, there have been exceptions. Black-white unity was attempted at several periods in the history of the American labour movement before the mid-1930's, and despite the bitter opposition of employers and sections of the trade-union leadership and rank-and-file, in some instances it achieved a lasting success." (ix)**

Foner traces the rise of the various federations of American labour in the 19th and 20th Centuries – the National Labour Union, the Knights of Labour, the American Federation of Labour, the Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies), the Congress of Industrial Organisations, and the merger of the AF of L and the CIO. Of these, only the Wobblies fought a consistent struggle to organise *all* industrial workers. As for the other national groupings, during their period of growth and struggle to establish themselves, they set out to organise workers of all races against the bosses. However, once entrenched, they tended to abandon militant struggle, allowed bureaucrats to suppress democratic control of the federations, and contented themselves with protecting their strictly limited gains. This involved turning against and discriminating against the black workers they had once sought to mobilise. Often, these unions allied themselves with the bosses against black workers. The end result was often to disillusion black workers with the unions and throw them into the arms of the organisations of the black petty bourgeoisie.

Although Foner clearly shows that racism ultimately serves the interests of capital, at the same time his book, by restricting its purview, can leave a reader with the impression that the exclusionist policies of the unions can be accounted for by the racism of their bureaucrats and members, that the racial division of the working class was the product mainly of racism coming from within the ranks of the labour movement itself.

It is a fundamental tenet of Marxism that social behaviour cannot be accounted for at the level of ideology alone. The explanation must be sought in an analysis of the material world – in the internal dynamic and laws of development of the productive system. In this case, such an analysis would show how a necessary aspect of capitalism – the competition it engenders between workers – sustains the division of the working class and leads to the reflection of these divisions in ideological distortions such as racism.

In the USA, slavery provided the first form of sustained accumulation, based on agriculture. Foner quotes the great 19th Century black American leader, Frederick Douglass, to show how the bosses encouraged racial attitudes amongst already proletarianised white workers:

> "The slaveholders ... by encouraging the enmity of the poor, laboring white man against the blacks, succeeded in making the said white man almost as much a slave as the black man himself ... Both are plundered, and by the same plunderers. The slave is robbed by his master, of all his earnings above what is required for his physical necessities; and the white man is robbed by the slave system, of just results of his labor, because he is flung into competition with a class of laborers who work without wages. At present, the slaveholders blind them to this competition, by keeping alive their prejudices against the slaves as *men* — not against them as *slaves*. They appeal to their pride, often denouncing emancipation, as tending to place the white working man on an equality with Negroes, and, by this means, they succeed in drawing off the minds of the poor whites from the real fact, that by the rich slave-master, they are already regarded as but a single remove from equality with the slave." (p. 8.)

At the conclusion of the Civil War serious problems faced the American working class. Demobilisation, immigration and the economic depression created serious unemployment. In this situation the ability of the employers to drive down wages was further strengthened by the appearances of ex-slaves in the labour market. In many instances strikes of white workers were broken when the bosses brought in blacks as strike-breakers.

The capitalists made the most of these conditions, encouraging white workers to blame their problems on blacks rather than on the real cause, the exploitation system of production based on private property and private profit. In this way capitalism attempted to foster division between black and white workers, and to reap the profits.

This racial division was made easier by the varying origins of the members of the exploited classes, and the historically different processes by which they had been proletarianised. For many years after the emancipation of slaves in 1863, the vast majority of black Americans remained tied to the land. The form in which they were exploited and oppressed differed from the forms of capitalist exploitation of the poverty-stricken immigrants from Europe. The latter had been driven out of their own countries by the devastating effects of the development of capitalism there. In America they were forced either into im-

mediate wage-slavery, or to trek out West.

Foner has documented the historical facts with impressive thoroughness. He shows how *white* immigrant labour had been used to displace the *unorganised,* skilled and unskilled black workers who dominated infant American industry in the first half of the 19th Century. This was achieved through undercutting, and brutal physical assaults on black workers.

Craft unions then developed to protect skilled white workers against competition and undercutting. These craft unions became particularly *racist* in periods of rising unemployment or when changes in the technology of production rendered certain skills obsolete, propelling skilled workers out of their jobs. The exclusivism and elitism of the craft unions (grouped together under the American Federation of Labour) mainly affected black workers. But, as the racist labels of American speech indicate (wops, spicks, kikes, micks, dagos, polacks, gooks, etc.), racialism was also directed at other workers ("no Irish need apply").

The discriminatory practices and refusal of the AF of L craft unions to organise on an industrial basis, led to the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organisations in the 1930's. The CIO saw its task as the organisation of *all* workers into *industrial* unions. It resolutely dismissed any attempt to divide workers on racial grounds as a trick of the bosses. At its First Constitutional Convention in 1938, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

> "*Whereas,* Employers constantly seek to split one group of workers from another, and thus to deprive them of their full economic strength, by arousing prejudices based on race, creed, color or nationality, and one of the most frequent weapons used by employers to accomplish this end is to create false contests between Negro and white workers; now therefore be it
> *Resolved,* That the CIO hereby pledges itself to uncompromising opposition to any form of discrimination, whether political or economic, based on race, color, creed or nationality."
> (pp 229 - 230.)

In its early struggles before the Second World War, the CIO was democratically controlled and laid particular emphasis on the struggle of black workers. Even in the South, despite the vicious attacks of the Ku Klux Klan, black workers usually had the support of their white comrades, themselves acutely aware of the ways in which capital sought to use race to divide and more thoroughly exploit the workers. At the

same 1938 Convention a white trade unionist from Birmingham, Alabama, declared:

> **"We above all others must realise that if our movement is to go forward in the South, it cannot go forward without the aid and active support of the Negro people, and if we are to have this aid and support, if we are actually to get anywhere in the South, we must re-establish the franchise of the Negro people, together with the white workers, most of whom are also disfranchised. This is going to be our only guarantee of the continued existence and progress of the CIO in the South and it is the job of the CIO throughout the whole nation to get behind this legislation and put it across."**
> (pp 228 - 229.)

However, by the end of the Second World War the structure of US capitalism had changed. At the same time as the rapid mechanisation of agriculture forced large numbers of black share-croppers off the land in the South, the cut-back of wartime production and the beginnings of the technical transformation of industry led to large-scale unemployment and threatened the position of all workers. It was precisely at this point that the CIO back-tracked on its struggle for the right of blacks to work in industry and to receive an equal wage.

By the end of the war the CIO had established its right to organise. In the face of massive black unemployment at the outset of the Cold War, the CIO abandoned militant struggle, limited itself to protecting the positions of its members, and began to do the bosses' work for them. The now safely ensconced bureaucratic leadership of the CIO suppressed democratic control within its organisation, and together with the AF of L co-operated with the attempts of capital and the capitalist state to drive the left out of the labour movement, during the McCarthyite witch-hunts of the forties and fifties.

Any anti-capitalist struggle, *and particularly the struggle of black workers*, was labelled "communist-inspired", and a vicious programme of intimidation and victimisation was launched by the once-radical CIO. In 1949 the CIO withdrew from the World Federation of Trade Unions and, without consulting its membership, helped the AF of L set up the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, whose sole guiding principle was "anti-communism".

Foner has admirably documented the facts of American labour history, but has offered no explanation of how the structural changes in American capitalism (the end of slavery, the development of industry, mass production, the technological transformation, the rise of U.S. imperialism etc.) altered the relations between capital and labour at the workplace, and transformed the conditions of class struggle in America. This has two unfortunate consequences. One is to create the impression that the "exclusion" of black workers by organised labour is accounted for on the basis of "racism", without analysing what racism is, what its origin is and what its role is in the productive process. Secondly, by concentrating on what Lenin called "trade union consciousness", Foner has not adequately dealt with the political organisation of the working class. Though both the early Socialist Party and the Communist Party of the U.S.A. are mentioned, one would have liked a fuller discussion of the role of these and other parties in the working-class movement, and of their position on the question of black workers.

The struggle of black American workers is for much more than the right to "equal" exploitation by monopoly capitalism. Throughout much of the fifties and sixties, the absence of strong socialist leadership in the labour movement had the effect of driving many black workers into the arms of the political organisations of the black petty bourgeoisie. But, as the material so admirably set out in Foner's book makes clear, no matter how much civil rights legislation may be enacted, the discrimination against black workers in America will not end until the capitalist system on which it rests is overthrown. For this, the independent political organisation of the American working class is indispensable. More and more black workers are realising this and the most class-conscious of them are joining the ranks of the Communist Party of the USA for the reasons set out so brilliantly by Angela Davis in her explanation of "How I Became a Communist" published in *The African Communist* No. 61, Second Quarter, 1975.

·P.R.

THE LEADING FORCE IN REVOLUTION

The Development of an African Working Class: Studies in Class Formation and Action.
Edited by Richard Sandbrook and Robin Cohen, published by Longman, 1975, Price £3.50.

> **"Open your prisons, make ready your machine guns and cannons; nevertheless, at midnight on October the tenth, if our demands are not met, we declare the general strike."**

With this ultimatum, hurled defiantly at the colonial authorities in Francophone West Africa, the railway workers initiated the longest strike in African history – from 11 November 1947 to 19 March 1948. Job discrimination based on race was their major grievance.

Strike action in many parts of Africa at different times, both pre- and post- independence, is the subject of the case studies which make up most of this book. The workers' action reflected fundamentally similar grievances – low wages, job and wage discrimination, overtime payments, bad treatment and working conditions, contract labour, union recognition, corruption and elitism. In many cases strike action directed against problems in the immediate work situation developed rapidly into a more general questioning of the existing power structure, drawing in the support of other dissatisfied urban groups. In all cases, the workers demonstrated considerable tactical maturity and resourcefulness. The case studies, as vivid depictions of workers' solidarity and militancy, are interesting, and for the most part appear to be well-researched.

Against the background of the facts presented, the contributors take up a number of problems relating to the labour movement in Africa. The most important issue examined is that of identifying the revolutionary vanguard in African society, the agent of social transformation. The manner in which this is approached reveals, in my view, the basic weakness of this book, namely, that important political and theoretical questions are examined *empirically* rather than in terms of an organic *political* approach to class formation and class struggle. The

problem with academic case studies generally is that they tend to be rather one-dimensional, and the relation of one phenomenon to others, as part of a coherent whole, is not examined.

In raising the question of the revolutionary vanguard, a number of the contributors address themselves to what is known as the *'labour aristocracy'* thesis. Nowhere in the book is the thesis fully and systematically presented, but it is given as emanating largely from Frantz Fanon, and studies by Arrighi and Saul. In the main, they hold that the African working class, enjoying a comparatively well-renumerated and privileged position in society, has everything to lose in a revolutionary struggle against the ruling classes, and that the vanguard must be sought amongst the African peasantry.

The case studies are used to show that, far from behaving as a collaborationist elite, the working class has in many instances become the political focus of more general discontent amongst small traders, the unemployed etc. As one small entrepreneur commented during the conflict over the Adebo award in Nigeria:

> **"Now I as a tailor have only one voice and it cannot be heard. The workers are different. They can stand and shout together. They must gain their cola (cost of living award)... because they are numerous in Lagos. The politicians always ignore the poor; they like money too much. We all hate these big men and the workers are showing it, that's all!"**

Militant action by workers in many parts of Africa has been met with hostility by both the colonial regimes, and by the contemporary ruling classes; victimization, imprisonment, banning of trade unions and suspension of the right to strike etc. All this cries out against the labels 'labour aristocracy' and 'collaborators' applied to the African working class.

Incidents are recounted revealing the workers' resentment of elite wealth, corruption and authoritarianism, and facts provided to show that when the urban cost of living is taken into account, the urban/rural income differential is not as great as is often supposed.

But while these case studies are interesting, they constitute a purely descriptive appraisal of the 'labour aristocracy' thesis. The authors fail to criticise the thesis theoretically. They do not take up the question in the context of an analysis of the objective relations of production

under capitalism in Africa, and the process of surplus creation and extraction. Only in this way can a proper reply be given to the idea that a major section of the African working class are beneficiaries of the surplus extracted from the peasantry.

Moreover, the contributors fail to examine the question politically, and to consider its implications for the African revolution. Every theory inevitably serves a political function, as J. Woddis said in this respect of Fanon:

> **"Any unthinking acceptance of Fanon's ideas on the African working class assists those who want to keep the working class in a subordinate position in order that they can push their countries along a capitalist path in submission to neo-colonialism and in bondage to imperialism. Despite his militant language, his passionate denunciation of colonialism, and his plea for radical change, Fanon rejects the main revolutionary class in modern society, and provides ideological cover for an alliance of the elite, the petty-bourgeoisie, the lumpenproletariat and the peasants against the workers."**
> (*African Communist* No 53, 1973)

This volume is useful in providing testimony to the militancy and resolve of the African working class, and its ability to rally around itself other dissident elements. But it provides no theoretical advance in developing a perspective on the African revolution.

L.C.

NEW LIGHT ON THE HISTORY OF UNION

The Foundation of the Union of South Africa 1902 - 1910
by R.R. Viatkina, Moscow 1976.

The subject of this book has long attracted the attention of bourgeois historians, but as far as we know Dr R.R. Viatkina is the first to have analysed it from the point of view of Marxism.

She pays particular attention to the social and national processes which led to the co-operation of the English-speaking and Afrikaner bourgeoisie in the unification of the country. The main factor which united these groups was their common desire to secure privileges for the white population at the expense of the black, thus turning South Africa

into a "white man's country". Politics based on racial discrimination was the basis of unification.

Dr Viatkina has arrayed a wide range of documents to show that the "generous" policy of the Liberal Party government of Britain at the time was in reality nothing but the continuation of the former imperialist course under new conditions. She states unequivocally: "British South African policy was pursued in the interest of British imperialism. In a period when the imperialist powers intensified their struggle for the new partition of the world, the South African dominion was intended to consolidate British rule in this strategically important area and to ensure the position of the British monopolies".

The foundation of the Union was the product of an agreement between the South African bourgeoisie and British imperialism. This agreement was aimed at the joint exploitation of the black population and resulted in the emergence of special-type colonialism in South Africa, where both the oppressed and the oppressor nations lived together in the same territory. Dr Viatkina shows how what was done in 1910 laid the foundation for the vicious racist regime which now exists in the Republic of South Africa.

Using historical sources rarely consulted by other scholars, Dr Viatkina analyses the reaction of the African and other oppressed people to the proposed unification of South Africa. The oppressed and exploited ethnic groups protested vehemently because all the negotiations were conducted behind their backs. But their protest was ineffective, says Dr Viatkina, because of the lack of unity amongst them which hindered the development of the struggle for national liberation. National and tribal backwardness as well as language, cultural and socio-economic distinctions were the main factors preventing joint action by Africans, Coloureds and Indians against colonialism at the beginning of the 20th century.

As an example, Dr Viatkina cites the Zulu revolt led by Bambata in 1906 - 1908 which failed because it was conducted on a tribal basis. Thus the Zulu struggle was isolated from the other nationalities in South Africa despite the fact that it was in essence directed against the self-same colonial oppression, racial discrimination and deprivation of political rights from which they all suffered.

Her book is written in a spirit of solidarity with the oppressed peoples of South Africa and is typical of the theoretical and technical

contribution made by Soviet scientists nowadays. Many of the principles she sets out can serve as a good guide to our movement in formulating the strategy and tactics of the South African revolution.

Phila Ndlovu

PROPAGANDISTS FOR APARTHEID

The Great White Hoax: South Africa's International Propaganda Machine

A report published by the Africa Bureau, London. Price £1.

This is a report compiled by eight researchers into the workings of the official and unofficial agencies responsible for promoting the South African image at home and abroad. A mass of information is compressed into 80 pages of text, and there is also a bibliography and a useful index.

In October 1974, in the House of Assembly, Dr. C. Mulder, Minister of Information, stated: "I have said before that my department will not remain on the defensive – we have now gone over to the offensive. We are now equipped with an area map, so to speak, on which we can intelligently base our strategy, a map which shows up enemy strength and weaknesses and their respective positions."

In 1948 the Department spent R50, 000. By 1976 its budget had soared to R13.8 million. This is only part of the vast funds spent on public relations activities by this department and by other departments and by the numerous organisations, private and public, which propagate the cause of apartheid in South Africa and abroad.

As part of the "offensive" the Department compiles a monthly report on the foreign press showing each publication's political affiliation, circulation figures and attitudes to official South Africa. This report is sent to the Cabinet and to each foreign correspondent in South Africa, no doubt to let him know that he and his paper are under continual surveillance.

This huge investment in whitewash for the apartheid state is not spent on propaganda alone, on feeding information to newspapers, journals, politicians, businessmen, schools – in fact to anyone who might be susceptible. Much of the expenditure is also applied to the

very rewarding job of making friends and influencing people in various countries by inviting them and taking them as guests on travel junkets in SA where they are lavishly entertained and shown the attractive side of the country, its scenery, its game reserves, its lovely beaches and selected scenes of tame tribal life.

It is indeed most illuminating to learn that "Interviews (for the guests) are arranged with ... political leaders. Chief Buthelezi is much in demand." This is not the only mention of Buthelezi in this book. The role of this "militant" politician is clearly one of the reasons why the SA Government appreciates his value notwithstanding the occasional "militancy" of his views.

In the foreword to this book the question is asked: "Many people wonder how South Africa's apartheid system which is based on discrimination against the majority of the people of that country can survive. One answer to this is that the truth about South Africa is hidden from us by one of the most effective lie machines in history."

The main reason for the ability of the white supremacists to continue to dominate South Africa and to threaten the rest of Africa – a reason barely touched upon in this book – can be found in the tremendous material, political and military help given by the Governments and the powerful corporations of, in the main, the USA, England, West Germany and France, and also help in directly operating that lie machine in order to continue to extract huge profits from the exploitation of the South African people.

Nevertheless this book, however unwittingly, reveals to our fascinated eyes the tremendous expenditure in money, time, material and brains which the imperialists, colonialists and reaction in general willingly lay out in what to them is only a part (though an important part) of the worldwide ideological battle for the "minds and hearts" of people everywhere. Far too many communists in far too many countries still naively underestimate the extent and the significance of the lie machines which our opponents operate everywhere and whose products surround us and whose influence grows in intensity day by day as socialism grows in strength and capitalism decays. If this booklet does nothing else than make more people aware of the danger of being brainwashed by the media of the bourgeoisie in all countries it will have served a useful purpose.

B.J.

THE ARTERIES OF IMPERIALISM

Cape to Cairo
by Mark Strage. Penguin Books £1.25
Strategic Highways of Africa
by Guy Arnold and Ruth Weiss. Julian Friedmann Publishers £3.50

With a mass of frequently irrelevant detail, these books examine from different angles aspects of the communications networks built by the colonialists in Africa. *Cape to Cairo* describes the so-called "Scramble for Africa", when the European powers parcelled out amongst themselves nine-tenths of the continent during the last third of the 19th century. In the words of the author, it is an attempt to relate "how rape on such a colossal scale was planned and perpetrated", by focussing on efforts to build a railway from the Cape to Cairo through British-controlled territory. While *Strategic Highways of Africa* covers some of the same historical ground, it concentrates on events in the 1970's as they have been affected by the opening up, destruction or denial of use of certain vital routes.

Lenin wrote in the 1920 Preface to *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*: "The building of railways seems to be a simple, natural, democratic, cultural and civilising enterprise; that is what it is in the opinion of the bourgeois professors who are paid to depict capitalist slavery in bright colours, and in the opinion of petty-bourgeois philistines. But as a matter of fact the capitalist threads which in thousands of different intercrossings bind these enterprises with private property in the means of production in general, have converted this railway construction into an instrument for oppressing a *thousand million* people (in the colonies and semi-colonies)..."

While in both books some recognition is given to the fact that lines of communication were instruments of oppression, created solely to facilitate exploitation of the continent's resources, the authors fail to analyse the nature of that oppression and consequently do not adequately explain the significance of the colonial transport networks for independent Africa.

This lack of understanding is evident in the conclusion of *Cape to*

Cairo. Describing the 1948 election defeat of Smuts ("the most prestigious statesman his country – his continent – had produced in modern times"?!) and the 1952 Egyptian revolution as the beginning of the end for colonialism in Africa, Mark Strage writes: "For better or worse, the time had come for the Africans to take back their continent". Just as he fails to grasp neo-colonialism, so *Cape to Cairo* does not portray the essence of colonial domination – economic control.

Strage attributes the "Scramble for Africa" to "...the white man's enterprise, his skill at organising resources, his determination in the face of awesome adversity, and his unquenchable greed." There is no mention in *Cape to Cairo* of the fact that it was during this period he covers (1870 - 1900) that the transition occurred from the capitalism of "free competition" to monopoly capitalism – imperialism as defined by Lenin; and that the intensification of the struggle for the partitioning of the world was connected to this transition to monopoly capitalism. "Colonial possession alone gives the monopolies complete guarantee in the struggle against competitors ... The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt, the more intense the competition and the hunt for sources of raw materials throughout the whole world, the more desperate the struggle for the acquisition of colonies." (V. I. Lenin: *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*.)

The author is also unclear on the nature of the imperialist state. Although he details numerous instances of co-operation and underhand collusion between individual capitalists like Rhodes and their respective governments, he never explains whose interests the state represented and served, or why governments opposed colonial expansion at some times but not others. The colonial policy of a particular government is depicted as an accident, depending on whether the colonial minister of the time was 'in favour of colonies' or not; whereas in fact colonial policy reflected the particular stage of development of capitalism. Between about 1840 and 1860, for instance, at the height of the period of "free competition" in Britain, the leading bourgeois politicians opposed the possession of colonies. Their attitude changed because of the transition to monopoly capitalism.

While the other book – *Strategic Highways of Africa* – is somewhat clearer on the nature of colonialism, its main fault is an incorrect assessment of the solution to the problem of Africa's continued domination.

At independence African countries inherited transport systems directed, like every other aspect of their economies, towards the former colonial powers. The colonialists' only concern was to establish lines of communication to facilitate trade between Europe and Africa, so African countries were left isolated from one another. Some highways were built to link the latest mineral find by the shortest route to the sea; railways were extended at times for the sole purpose of transporting troops during colonial wars. There was no question of planning communications for the benefit of the colonies themselves.

Just as the restructuring of independent Africa's production pattern is a formidable task requiring firstly the political will to break with imperialism, so communications networks have to be drastically altered. If not, they simply facilitate the replacement of colonial by neo-colonial exploitation. A thorough examination of how and why certain governments have tackled this problem, while the majority have not, would have been useful; one expected this in an account of strategic highways in Africa. But such an analysis is lacking, although the origin of the communications problem and the current situation in this sphere are dealt with for some countries.

A major deficiency is the authors' misreading of the forces for progress in the world today, and the consequent inadequate treatment of the question of socialist aid – the key to Africa's struggle against neo-colonialism.

J.B.H.

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ALLENDE'S CHILE

An Inside View...

by Edward Boorstein

author of THE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION OF CUBA

Detailing the turbulent events which led to the 1973 coup in Chile, this book exposes the manysided intervention by U.S. corporations and government agencies which collaborated with reactionary Chilean military, political and business forces to overthrow the Popular Unity government. Boorstein is a U.S. economist with unique experience working for the Federal Reserve Board, the post-World War II U.S. military government in Germany, and more recently for Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Commerce. He functioned as an assistant to President Allende's Economic Advisor for many months prior to the coup and narrowly escaped arrest and imprisonment by Pinochet's putchists when they brutally seized power.

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